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PRINCIPLES OF ELOQUENCE,

Principes d'éloquence.

ADAPTED TO THE

PULPIT AND THE BAR.

BY THE ABBE MAURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH; WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES,

BY JOHN NEAL LAKE, A. M.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

MR. WESLEY'S DIRECTIONS

CONCERNING PRONUNCIATION AND GESTURE.

Neque verò mihi quidquam præstabilius videtur, quàm posse dicendo tenere hominum cœtus, mentes allicere, voluntates impellere quò velit: unde autem velit, deducere.—*Cicero.*

We must not judge so unfavourably of eloquence as to reckon it only a frivolous art that a declaimer uses to impose upon the weak imagination of the multitude, and to serve his own ends. It is a very serious art; designed to instruct people; suppress their passions, and reform their manners; to support the laws; direct public councils, and to make men good and happy.—*Fenelon.*

NEW-YORK,

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1833.

TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND BIELBY,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

My Lord,—Whatever relates to the subject of eloquence in general, and to the eloquence of the pulpit in particular, has a peculiar claim to be dedicated to one who, in addition to his other eminent qualities, has exhibited, both from the pulpit and the press, so distinguished a model of the excellence and commanding influence of this art.

Should this translation, with the accompanying notes and illustrations, chiefly derived from authors of celebrity, serve to promote in the English reader, and particularly in students for the pulpit or the bar, an attention to those principles which may conduce to their future usefulness in life, my utmost wishes will be gratified.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient, and most humble servant,

John Neal Lake.

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PREFACE

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

The name of the Abbe Maury hath become so distinguished, not only in France, but also in this and other countries of Europe, that his literary productions will, probably, attract a degree of attention corresponding with that which his public character and conduct have excited.

As a member of the Constituting National Assembly it was his lot to step forward at an epoch which will for ever remain memorable in the annals of France.

In the midst of those contests and recriminations which prevailed among the different orders of which that assembly was composed, the Abbe Maury stood forth as the champion of the Church, and of aristocracy. His eloquence and abilities elevated him to distinguished importance among his brethren, while his undaunted spirit acquired fresh energy from the number, the abilities, and the attacks of his opponents: thus, though repeatedly foiled, yet like an expiring hero in the field of battle, he was determined not to yield but with his latest breath.

His zeal and talents shone conspicuous in this crisis of public affairs; and we are informed that he hath since received from the hands of his holiness at Rome the reward of a strenuous defence of a tottering Church.

But not only hath the senate borne witness to his abilities: the press, also, superadds its testimony in various literary productions.

Eloquence, the subject of that work which is here presented in an English dress, appears to have occupied his maturest thoughts; and the justice and enlargement of

his ideas upon this subject mark the success with which he has pursued it.

To boast of his attaining to originality of thought on a subject which hath been so frequently and so ably discussed, would, doubtless, be presumptuous; to insinuate that he has written a complete system would be to contradict his own professions; but to acknowledge that he has thrown out a variety of useful hints, and that in his manner of discussion he is lively and interesting, is no more than to pay him that tribute to which his merit may justly lay claim.

The following dissertation is only one of several which M. Maury hath given to the public. There are also collected in one volume the Panegyrics of St. Louis and of Fenelon; Reflections on the sermons of Bossuet; and the Panegyric of St. Austin.

In these he has discovered the talents of an orator, particularly in that species of the art styled panegyric, to which the French have ever shown more attachment than the English.*

In the work now offered to the public, and which seems the most material for a young speaker to peruse, the abbe has described those rules, and suggested those observations, by which he appears to have been guided in his own compositions.

In confirmation of the good opinion which the translator has conceived of M. Maury's performance, he transcribes, with pleasure, the remarks of the Monthly Reviewers on those discourses, of which the following translation constitutes the first:—

"The first of these discourses relates to various parts of the eloquence of the pulpit, and does great honour to the taste, judgment, and feelings of the ingenious author.

* A late publication hath since appeared, and been attributed to the abbe, consisting, chiefly, of speeches delivered by him in the National Assembly.

His reflections on Cicero, Demosthenes, Bossuet, Fenelon, Bourdaloue, Saurin, Bridaine, &c, are sensible and solid; and his precepts and rules are every way adapted to form the taste of a young orator to that affecting simplicity which disdains all frivolous ornaments, and has no other object in view than to touch and to persuade.

"This discourse is followed by two orations that were delivered before the French Academy in honour of St. Louis and Fenelon; another in honour of St. Augustine, delivered in the General Assembly of the French clergy; and a piece entitled, 'Reflections on the Sermons of Bossuet, last published.' All these are excellent in their kinds." (*Monthly Review*, vol. lvii, p. 309.)

The testimony of an eminent literary character now living, were liberty allowed to transcribe it, and mention his name, would add strength to the foregoing observations.

The editor feels constrained to apologize for the part he has taken. He began at first to peruse and translate the Abbe Maury's performance "on the Eloquence of the Pulpit and the Bar," in the course of his private studies, and merely with a view to his personal improvement.

Some elucidations from English authors naturally occurred to his mind, which he has accordingly annexed. But it was not till afterward, and in compliance with the wish of those whose judgment he respects, that he thought of submitting the whole to public view. He cannot be insensible that imperfections may discover themselves to the eye of rigid criticism; while, at the same time, he would indulge a hope, that the time and pains employed will render this translation of the abbe's sentiments not wholly unacceptable to the young student and reader, for whose use it is principally designed.

It will appear on perusal that the Abbe Maury's predilection for French preachers and orators gives a tincture of severity to his censures on the English; and that in one or two instances his zeal for the Romish Church

embitters his language with regard to the conduct and writings of some Protestants.

Every man hath his partialities. For the prejudices of education, country, connections, great allowances must, and by every liberal mind will be made. This is an age of free inquiry; and in proportion as this spirit prevails, we shall say with the poet,

Veniam petimus
Dabimusque vicissim.

Free liberty must, therefore, be allowed to every reader to judge for himself what degree of regard is to be paid to a few passages wherein the abbe gives such an unbounded preference to some of his favourite French Catholic preachers above those of the Protestant Church, and the English nation.

To the works of eloquent French writers recommended by M. Maury, perhaps it will be no discredit to add as a model of pulpit eloquence, the sermons of the late Rev. Charles Chais, pastor of the French Church at the Hague.*

For English authors and preachers, the reader is referred to several of the notes annexed to the following translation.

Of those who have written professedly on the subject of eloquence, the student may profitably peruse Cicero, Quintilian, and Longinus among the ancients; and such modern authors as Ward, Gibbon, Fordyce, Campbell, Blair, and Polwhele; to which may be added Rollin and Fenelon.

* The sermons of the Rev. C. Chais were printed in 1790, in two volumes; for a character of which, the reader is referred to the appendix to the seventy-eighth volume of the Monthly Review, and the appendix to the third volume enlarged.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following treatise on eloquence is printed on the recommendation of our Book Committee. It is considered, by competent judges, to be among the best we have in so few words.

The directions of Mr. Wesley concerning pronunciation and gesture are added in an appendix. After all, it would be well for all deeply to consider the remarks of the same author in his sermon on charity:—*Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels*—"with an eloquence such as never was found in man, concerning the nature, attributes, and works of God, whether of creation or providence; though I were not herein a whit behind the chief of apostles; preaching like St. Peter, and praying like St. John: yet unless humble, gentle, patient love, be the ruling temper of my soul, I am no better in the judgment of God *than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.* The highest eloquence, therefore, either in private conversation or in public ministrations; the brightest talents either for preaching or prayer; if they were not joined with humble, meek, and patient resignation, might sink me the deeper into hell, but will not bring me one step nearer heaven."

But though these sentiments are unquestionably just and Scriptural, yet when the soul of a minister is thus adorned with the graces of love, of meekness, patience, and resignation, if he possess also the power of an elegant and forcible elocution, he will not only shine with a greater brilliancy, but will also be more abundantly useful in winning souls to Christ.

N. BANGS.

New-York, January, 1833.

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MR. WESLEY'S DIRECTIONS

CONCERNING PRONUNCIATION AND GESTURE.

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THE PRINCIPLES OF ELOQUENCE.

SECTION I.

DESIGN OF THIS DISCOURSE.

In presenting the public with this feeble production, I propose, with a just diffidence of my own abilities, to lay before them some observations which have occurred to me in the course of my reading, or oratorial compositions, respecting the art of eloquence, which it is the study of my life to cultivate.

They were written at first merely for my own private use. If I have sometimes given a decided opinion, I entreat the reader to remember that I speak to him with freedom, yet without presumption, and that I myself am far from considering the result of my observations as laying down rules of the art.

The general idea which I form, at first view, of the eloquence of the pulpit, is this :—

SECTION II.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT.

A man of sensibility discovers his friend about to take a step contrary to his interest or duty. He is desirous of opposing it, but he is afraid of repelling confidence by a hasty contradiction. He gently insinuates himself into his mind. He does not, at first, oppose. He inquires. He is not regarded. He requires only to be heard, and instantly he states his reasons, and offers convincing arguments with modest diffidence. No answer is returned.

He then complains, not of obstinacy, but of silence. He meets all objections and refutes them. Animated by the tender zeal of friendship, he is far from attempting to shine by his wit, or to dishearten by his reproaches. He speaks only the language of affection. At length, assured of having arrested the attention of his friend, he uncovers the precipice under his feet, and shows him all its depth, in order to alarm his imagination, that weakest, and yet most predominant of our faculties.

He thus succeeds in moving him. He now descends to entreaty, and gives an unrestrained vent to his sighs and tears. The work is done; the heart yields, and his friend is fully persuaded. They both embrace; and it is to the eloquence of friendship that reason and virtue are indebted for the honour of the victory.

Christian orators! behold your model. Let that compassionate man, who should be affected with sympathetic tenderness in order to convince, be you; and that friend, who should be moved in order to be undeceived, be your auditory.

SECTION III.

OF THE MEANS OF PERSUADING A LARGE ASSEMBLY.

It is only necessary, in fact, for the orator to keep one man in view amidst the multitude that surrounds him; and, excepting those enumerations which require some variety in order to paint the passions, conditions, and characters, he ought merely, while composing, to address himself to that one man, whose mistakes he laments, and whose foibles he discovers. This man is, to him, as the genius of Socrates* standing continually at his side, and, by turns,

* Lactantius observes (*de origine erroris*, ii, 14) that "Socrates affirmed that there was a demon or tutelar angel constantly near him, which had kept him company from a child, and by whose beck and

interrogating him, or answering his questions. This is he whom the orator ought never to lose sight of in writing, till he obtains a conquest over his prepossessions. The arguments which will be sufficiently persuasive to overcome *his* opposition, will equally control a large assembly.

The orator will derive farther advantages from a numerous concourse of people, where all the impressions made at the time will convey the finest triumphs of the art, by forming a species of action and reaction between the auditory and the speaker.* It is in this sense that Cicero is right in saying that "no man can be eloquent without a multitude to hear him."† The auditor came to hear a discourse:—the orator attacks him; accuses him; makes him abashed; addresses him, at one time, as his confident, at another, as his mediator, or his judge. See with what address he unveils his most concealed passions; with what penetration he shows him his most intimate thoughts: with what energy he annihilates his best framed excuses! The culprit repents. Profound attention, consternation, confusion, remorse, all announce that the orator has penetrated, in his retired meditations, into the recesses of the heart. Then, provided no ill-timed sally of wit follow to blunt the strokes of Christian eloquence, there may be in the church two thousand auditors, yet there will be but one thought, but one opinion: and all those individuals united

instruction he guided his life." See a farther account in the Life of Socrates, *New Biographical Dictionary;* see also, *Universal History*, vol. i, p. 103, and *Turret. Instit. Theolog.* vol. i, p. 616, 617.

* "The very aspect of a large assembly, engaged in some debate of moment, and attentive to the discourse of one man, is sufficient to inspire that man with such elevation and warmth, as both gives rise to strong expressions, and gives them propriety. Passion easily rises in a great assembly where the movements are communicated by mutual sympathy between the orator and the audience." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 54, 4to.)

† *Orator sine multitudine audiente eloquens esse non potest.* (Brutus, 338.)

form that ideal man whom the orator had in view while composing his discourse.

SECTION IV.

ADVANTAGES OF AN ORATOR'S STUDYING HIMSELF.

But, you may ask, Where is this ideal man, composed of so many different traits, to be found, unless we describe some chimerical being? Where shall we find a phantom like this, singular but not outré, in which every individual may recognize himself, although it resembles not any one? Where shall we find him? In your own heart. Often retire there. Survey all its recesses. *There* you will trace both the pleas for those passions which you will have to combat, and the source of those false reasonings which you must point out. To be eloquent, we must enter within ourselves. The first productions of a young orator are generally too far-fetched. His mind, always on the stretch, is making continual efforts, without his ever venturing to commit himself to the simplicity of nature, until experience teach him, that, to arrive at the sublime, it is, in fact, less necessary to elevate his imagination, than to be deeply impressed with his subject.

If you have studied the sacred books; if you have observed men; if you have attended to writers on morals who serve you instead of historians; if you have become familiar with the language of orators; make trial of your eloquence upon yourself: become, so to speak, the auditor of your own discourses; and thus, by anticipating the effect which they ought to produce, you will easily delineate true characters; you will perceive that, notwithstanding the shades of difference which distinguished them, all men bear an interior resemblance to one another, and that their vices have a uniformity, because they always proceed either from weakness or interest. In a word, your

descriptions will not be indeterminate: and the more thoroughly you shall have examined what passes within your own breast, with more ability will you unfold the hearts of others.

SECTION V.

ON RHETORICAL COMPOSITION.

THESE general principles are insufficient. Let us, then, pass on to particulars, and apply the rules of art to the composition of a discourse.

"It is an arduous undertaking," says the Roman orator, "to appear before a numerous assembly which listens to our discussion of the most important subjects, since there is scarcely any one who will not more nicely and rigidly observe the faults than the beauties of our discourses; for whenever we speak in public, judgment is pronounced upon us."*

Indeed, beside the natural talents which eloquence requires, and the want of which application never supplies, every orator, who wishes to give satisfaction to his auditory, must join to the instruction which he has derived from his preparatory studies, an intimate knowledge of the subject which he proposes to discuss. He must meditate on it for a considerable time in order to perceive all its principles, and to discover all its relations.† It is by this operation,

* *Magnum quoddam est onus atque munus suscipere atque profiteri se esse, omnibus silentibus, unum maximis de rebus, magno in conventu hominum audiendum. Adest enim fere nemo quinacutius atque acrius vitia in dicente quam recta videat, quoties enim decimus, toties de nobis judicatur.* (Brutus, 27, 125.)

M. Maury's translation of the former part of the above quotation is periphrastic rather than just. The English translation is literal from the French, which is also followed in some other quotations.

† "The foundation of all that can be called eloquent is good sense and solid thought. Let it be the first study of public speakers, in addressing any popular assembly, to be previously masters of the

purely intellectual, that we collect, according to the expression of Cicero, "a forest of ideas and subjects,"* the accumulation of which excites in the orator a certain eagerness to write, or rather constrains him to deliver by himself the thoughts that occur to his mind; and afterward renders his matter more copious, and his composition more energetic and perfect. If, at such moments, he would avoid the labour of the memory, he should write as fast as he composes.

When the orator hath once collected the principal proofs, which are like the materials of the building, he quickly makes himself master of his subject; he already discerns the whole of the discourse through those detached ideas which form the ground work, as soon as he directs them to one point.

This disposition costs the orator little, "for the discourse," says Fenelon, "is the proposition unfolded, and the proposition is an abstract of the discourse."†

In pointing out this method of study, it is my endeavour to conform to it, while, in writing, the different desultory reflections which I have suggested on the principles of oratory, begin now, of their own accord, to arrange themselves into proper order.

Do you feel, when composing, notwithstanding these precautions, the languor of an exhausted imagination? Quit your retirement. Converse upon your subject with an intelligent friend. By communicating to him your first thoughts, you will thereby extend the circle of your ideas;

business on which they are to speak; to be well provided with matter and argument; and to rest upon these the chief stress. This will always give to their discourse an air of manliness and strength, which is a powerful argument of persuasion. Ornament, if they have genius for it, will follow of course." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 49.)

* *Sylva rerum ac sententiarum comparanda est.* (De Orat. 29.)

† Letter on Eloquence, addressed to the French Academy, p. 180, in Stevenson's translation.

and in such moments of enthusiastic fervour, some fortunate strokes will escape you which you have searched for in vain in the retirement of the closet.

SECTION VI.

OF THE PLAN OF A DISCOURSE.

HAVE you thoroughly investigated the principles, and dived, if I may so speak, to the bottom of your subject? It is here where art begins. It is time to fix your plan.

This is generally the part which costs much labour, and which very much influences the success of the discourse.

We may censure the method* of divisions as a fatal restraint on eloquence; let us, nevertheless, adopt it without fearing to diminish the energy of rhetorical movements, while it directs them with greater exactness.—Genius needs to be guided in its progress, and the curb

* "In all kinds of public speaking, nothing is of greater consequence than a proper and clear method. Though the method be not laid down in form, no discourse of any length should be without method; that is, every thing should be found in its proper place.—Every one who speaks will find it of the greatest advantage to himself to have previously arranged his thoughts, and classed under proper heads, in his own mind, what he is to deliver. This will assist his memory, and carry him through his discourse, without that confusion to which one is every moment subject, who has fixed no distinct plan of what he has to say.

"And, with respect to the hearers, order in discourse is absolutely necessary for making any proper impression. It adds both force and light to what is said. It makes them accompany the speaker easily and readily, as he goes along; and makes them feel the full effect of every argument which he employs.

"In every sort of oration, a clear method is of the utmost consequence; but in those embroiled and difficult cases which belong to the bar, it is almost all in all. Too much pains, therefore, cannot be taken in previously studying the plan and method. If there be indistinctness and disorder there, we can have no success in convincing; we leave the whole cause in darkness." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 53, 54, 83.) See also the same author's judicious sentiments in favour of divisions in sermons, p. 170.

which preserves it from wandering, restrains by salutary checks, and renders it the greatest service. It is thus that genius becomes strengthened and increased, when it proceeds under the guidance of reason and judgment.*

The hearer who knows not whither we are conducting him, soon wanders. The plan is so necessary in order to fix his attention, that it remains no longer a question whether the orator ought to point it out to him.

Is this plan (as indispensably requisite to be composed with method as to be heard with effect,) ill conceived,

* The following observations exactly correspond with the sentiments of our author: "Nothing can contribute more toward bringing the powers of genius to their ultimate perfection, than a severe judgment, equal in degree to the genius possessed. For the greater the strength and vivacity of the imagination which gives birth to those ideas, the greater must be that wisdom and prudence which are requisite to moderate the fire of imagination, and rule its vivacity when it becomes too daring. Reason ought to be stronger than genius, in order to know how far enthusiasm may go. The judgment and prudence which should belong to such a one for the improvement and balance of his genius, ought themselves to be brought to their utmost perfection by the ministration of art, without which nothing exact, or regular can be produced." (*Reflections on Aristotle's Art of Poetry*, sec. 16, 17.)

"In order to render the productions of genius regular and just, as well as elegant and ingenious, the discerning and coercive power of judgment should mark and restrain the excursions of a wanton imagination; in other words, the austerity of reason should blend itself with the gayety of the graces. The proper office of judgment in composition is to compare the ideas which imagination collects; to observe their agreement or disagreement, their relations and resemblances; to point out such as are of a homogeneous nature; to mark and reject such as are discordant; and, finally, to determine the truth and utility of the inventions or discoveries which are produced by the power of the imagination. This faculty is, in all its operations, cool, attentive, and considerate. It canvasses the design, ponders the sentiments, examines their propriety and connection, and reviews the whole composition with severe impartiality. Thus it appears to be in every respect a proper counterbalance to the rambling and volatile power of imagination." (*Essay on Genius*, b. i, sect. 1, pages 8, 9.)

obscure, and indeterminate? There will be in the proofs an inevitable confusion, the subjects will not be clearly distinguished, and the arguments, instead of affording each other a mutual support, will interfere.*

The more you study your plan, the greater enlargement you give to your subject. Statements, which, at first, seemed sufficiently copious to embrace the substance of a discourse in all its extent, scarcely form a subdivision fertile enough when you are acquainted with the method of expanding your ideas.

Far from a Christian orator be those plans which dazzle by a sophistical singularity, a far-fetched antithesis, or a subtle paradox; plans neither sufficiently distinct to be retained, nor sufficiently important to be filled up, and which only hold out vain and useless speculations; plans built either upon undistinguishing epithets, which open no field for argument, or upon pretences more suited to an episode than to the division of a sermon. Let those uniform and corresponding subdivisions between the two branches of a discourse be especially discarded, which form a puerile contrast equally unworthy of an art so noble, and a ministry so august.

* "A sermon," says Mons. Claude, "should *clearly* and purely explain a text, make the sense easy to be comprehended, and place things before the people's eyes so that they may be understood without difficulty. This rule condemns embarrassment and obscurity, the most disagreeable thing in the world in a pulpit. It ought to be remembered that the greatest part of the hearers are simple people, whose profit, however, must be aimed at in preaching: but it is impossible to edify them, unless you be very clear.

"As to learned hearers, it is certain, they will always prefer a clear before an obscure sermon; for first, they will consider the simple, nor will their benevolence be content if the illiterate be not edified; and next, they will be loth to be driven to the necessity of giving too great an attention, which they cannot avoid if the preacher be obscure. The minds of men, whether learned or ignorant, generally avoid pain; and the learned have fatigue enough, in the study, without increasing it at church." (*Robinson's Translation of Claude, on the composition of a sermon*, vol. i, p. 11.)

Avoid such dazzling faults. Give me a plan simple and rational. Your proofs, clear and distinct, will imprint themselves on my memory; and I shall render to your eloquence the best of all homages if I retain a lasting remembrance of what I have heard; for the best sermon is that which the hearer most easily recollects.*

SECTION VII.

OF PLANS DRAWN FROM THE TEXT.

Every orator possessed of original ideas, without ever attempting to astonish, will have new and striking plans, merely by attending to the scope of his own genius.

Plans are frequently singular and whimsical, especially

* The judicious Fenelon animadverts with a becoming severity, on the preacher's perversion of these words, "I have eaten ashes like bread," Psalm cii, 9, who discovered his aim to be to dazzle his hearers and to amuse them with points of wit, or puzzling riddles; and he observes that "instead of the preacher's laying down quaint conceits for the subject of his discourse, he ought in the division of a sermon to give such a one as naturally arises from the subject itself, and may impart light and just order to the several parts; such a division as may easily be remembered, and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole; a division, in fine, that may show at once the extent of the subject of all its parts." (*Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, pp. 4, 6, 7.)

The same writer also observes that "there should be nothing refined or far-fetched in a Christian orator's instructions; nor should he be setting up for wit and delicacy of invention when he ought to speak with the utmost seriousness and gravity, out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit whose words he borrows." (*Ibid.* p. 146.)

"What," says he, "could we think of a preacher who should, in the most affected jingle of words, show sinners the Divine judgment hanging over their heads, and hell open under their feet? There is a decency to be observed in our language as well as in our clothes. A disconsolate widow does not mourn in fringes, ribbons, and embroidery; and an apostolical minister ought not to preach the word of God in a pompous style, full of affected ornaments (or quaint conceits.) The pagans would not have endured to see even a comedy so ill acted." (*Letter to the French Academy*, p. 176.)

when they are drawn from the text. This irksome restraint scarcely ever succeeds in moral discourses.

Massillon hath sketched out the division of his sermon on confession, where we find so many beauties in detail, upon a passage in the Gospel. He takes for his text that verse of St. John, (chap. v, verse 3,) *There was a multitude of blind, halt, and withered.* Massillon compares the sinners, who surround the confessionals* to the sick people who were upon the side of the pool of Jerusalem: and he shows the analogy of those corporeal infirmities with the most usual abuse which renders confessions of no utility.

There were blind people; defect of knowledge in the examination. *There were halt;* insincerity in the confession. *There were impotent folk, withered;* want of sorrow in the repentance.

This application is doubtless ingenious; but it is too far-fetched. The excellent taste of Massillon only yields this once to the temptation of drawing a very artificial plan from the analysis of his text.†

He has made a happier use of the famous passage, *it is finished*, in his sermon on the passion. But this interpret-

* French—*les tribunaux de la penitence.*

† Methinks the censure of Dr. Blair applies to this quaint division of Massillon's discourse, when he remarks, that "the defects of most of the French sermons are these: from a mode that prevails among them of taking their texts from the lesson of the day, the connection of the texts with the subject is often unnatural and forced; and their applications of Scripture are fanciful rather than instructive." He farther remarks, "that their method is stiff and cramped by their practice of dividing their subject always either into three, or two main points, and their composition is in general too diffuse, and consists rather of a very few thoughts spread out, and highly wrought up, than of a rich variety of sentiments. Admitting, however, all these defects, it cannot be denied, that their sermons are formed upon the idea of a persuasive, popular oration; and therefore (he adds) I am of opinion that they may be read with benefit." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 119.)

ation is not his own, it having been previously unfolded in various monastic pieces.

It appears to me that the method of adapting the text to the plan can hardly ever be successfully made use of in instructions purely moral; and that it succeeds much better in mysteries,* in funeral orations and panegyrics, where the text will not suit the discourse unless it makes known the subject, and, at least indirectly, comprehends the division.

It is easy to find in the Holy Scripture verses consonant to the principal idea which we intend to express; and we are always pleased with the orator for those successful applications which, in some measure, render sacred the plan he hath chosen.†

SECTION VIII.

OF THE PROGRESSION OF THE PLAN.

WHETHER it be a moral subject that is discussed, or one's talent be exercised upon panegyrics or mysteries, it is always necessary to observe a specified progression in the distribution of the plan, in order to impart an increasing force to the points adduced, to give weight to the argument, and energy to the rhetorical movements. It is as rare as it is difficult to render both parts of a sermon equally excellent, because the same resources seldom present themselves to the imagination of the orator. The latter, however, ought to excel the former. Eloquence

* Fr. dans les Mysteres. The author probably means here, the solemn services of the Church, such as feasts, fasts, communions, &c.

† "I must confess I always disliked a forced text. Have you not observed that a preacher draws from a text whatever sermons he pleases? He insensibly warps and bends his subject to make the text fit the sermon that he has occasion to preach. This is frequently done, but I cannot approve of it." (*Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, p. 146.)

always declines when it ceases to rise. It is therefore to the second branch of the division that the most persuasive arguments and pathetic sentiments ought to be reserved.

Cicero, whose plan is very distinct in all his orations, although seldom announced in the exordium, adopts a method very favourable to the advancement of his proofs, which obliges him to be surpassing himself continually by fresh efforts, in proportion as he proceeds in the difficulties of his subject.

Open his orations. He at once denies the fact which is opposed to him; and afterward he proves that, by taking its truth for granted, nothing could thereby be concluded against his client. I shall only quote here two striking examples of this excellent method.

In defending Archias who had been his preceptor, and of whom he always speaks with the most lively gratitude, Cicero thus divides his oration: "I shall prove that Archias is a Roman citizen; and that, if he were not, he would be very deserving to be one."

The plan of the oration in favour of Milo is no less forcible. "Milo," says he, "hath not slain Clodius; if he had slain him, he would have done well." The mind of man cannot reason with more perspicuity and energy.

Nor are we to conclude that Cicero proceeds thus accidentally on some particular occasions. "In his oratorial divisions," in that charming dialogue where this great man submits to an examination upon this art, by answering all the questions which his son puts to him upon eloquence, Cicero establishes, as a fixed rule, this manner of dividing the discourse. He says, "It is thus you ought to reason; you must either deny the fact that meets you, or if you admit it, you must prove that the consequences which your opponent has drawn do not result from it."* I am

* Aut it a consistendum est ut quod objicatur factum neges aut illud quod factum fateare neges eam vim habere, atque id esse quod adversarius criminetur. (*Parag.* 29, 101.)

aware how seldom it is that we can follow this course in our pulpits, where the subjects discusssed are not always doubtful; but the more we imitate this method, the nearer we shall arrive at perfection.

SECTION IX.

OF THE INJURY WIT DOES TO ELOQUENCE.

To all those rules which art furnishes for conducting the plan of a discourse, we proceed to subjoin a general rule from which orators, and especially Christian orators, ought never to swerve.

When such begin their career, the zeal for the salvation of souls which animates them, doth not render them always unmindful of the glory which follows great success. A blind desire to shine and to please is often at the expense of that substantial honour which might be obtained, were they to give themselves up to the pure emotions of piety, which so well agree with the sensibility necessary to eloquence.

It is unquestionably to be wished that he who devotes himself to the arduous labours which preaching requires, should be wholly ambitious to render himself useful to the cause of religion. To such, reputation can never be a sufficient recompense. But if motives so pure have not sufficient sway in your breast, calculate, at least, the advantages of self-love, and you may perceive how inseparably connected these are with the success of your ministry.

Is it on your own account that you preach? Is it for you that religion assembles her votaries in a temple? You ought not to indulge so presumptuous a thought. However, I only consider you as an orator. Tell me, then, what is this you call eloquence? Is it the wretched trade of imitating that criminal, mentioned by a poet in his

satires, who "balanced his crimes before his judges with antithesis?"* Is it the puerile secret of forming jejune quibbles? of rounding periods? of tormenting one's self by tedious studies in order to reduce sacred instruction into a vain amusement? Is this, then, the idea which you have conceived of that Divine art which disdains frivolous ornaments, which sways the most numerous assemblies, and which bestows on a single man the most personal and majestic of all sovereignties? Are you in quest of glory? You fly from it. Wit alone is never sublime; and it is only by the vehemence of the passions that you can become eloquent.†

* ——— Crimina rasis
Librat in antithesis. (*Pers. Sat.* 1. l. 85, 86.)

† Mr. Hume judiciously observes that "productions which are merely surprising, without being natural, can never give any lasting entertainment to the mind. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expressions, strong flashes of wit, pointed similies, and epigrammatic turns, especially when they recur too frequently, are a disfigurement rather than any embellishment of discourse. As the eye, in surveying a Gothic building, is distracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loses the whole by its minute attention to the parts; so the mind, in perusing a work overstocked with wit, is fatigued and disgusted with the constant endeavour to shine and surprise. This is the case where a writer overabounds in wit, even though that wit, in itself, should be just and agreeable. But it commonly happens to such writers, that they seek for their favourite ornaments, even where the subject affords them not; and by that means have twenty insipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful." (*Hume's Essays*, Ess. xix, pp. 240, 241.)

"I like none of those witty turns which have nothing in them that is either solid, natural, or affecting, and which tend neither to convince, nor paint, nor persuade. All such tinsel wit (as that of Isocrates) must appear still more ridiculous when it is applied to grave and serious matters. You ask, Will you then allow of no antithesis? Yes, when the things we speak of are naturally opposite one to another, it may be proper enough to show their opposition. Such antithesis are just, and have a solid beauty, and a right application of them is often the most easy and concise manner of explaining things; but it is extremely childish to use artificial terms and wind-

Reckon up all the illustrious orators. Will you find among them conceited, or subtle, or epigrammatic writers? No; these immortal men confined their attempts to affect and persuade; and their having been always simple is that which always renders them great. How is this? you wish to proceed in their footsteps, and you stoop to the degrading pretensions of a rhetorician! and you appear in the form of a mendicant soliciting commendations before those

ings to make words clash and play one against another. At first this may happen to dazzle those who have no taste; but they soon grow weary of such a silly affectation. It looks very strange and awkward in a preacher to set up for wit and delicacy of invention, when he ought to speak with the utmost seriousness and gravity out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit whose words he borrows." (*Fenelon's Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, dial. ii, p. 26, and dial. iii, p. 146.)

"To form a just notion of Tully's eloquence, we must observe the harangues he made in his more advanced age. Then the experience he had in the weightiest affairs, the love of liberty, and the fear of those calamities that hung over his head, made him display the utmost efforts of his eloquence. When he endeavoured to support and revive expiring liberty, and to animate the commonwealth against Anthony his enemy, you do not see him use points of wit and quaint antithesis: he is then truly eloquent. Every thing seems artless, as it ought to be when one is vehement; with a negligent air he delivers the most natural and affecting sentiments, and says every thing that can move and animate the passions. (*Ibid.* dial. ii, p. 54.)

Pope justly observes:—

"True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does them good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood."

Essay on Criticism, l. 300.

The judicious Fenelon also remarks, from St. Austin, that "in the Apostle Paul, wisdom did not seek after the beauty of language, but that the beauties of language offered themselves and attended his wisdom." (*Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, dial. iii, p. 106.)

very men who ought to tremble at your feet! Recover from this ignominy. Be eloquent by zeal, instead of being a mere declaimer through vanity. And be assured that the most certain method of preaching well for yourself, is to preach usefully to others.

SECTION X.

OF THE EXORDIUM.

Wit pleases in an epigram or a song, but it never produces great effects in a numerous assembly. True eloquence proscribes all those thoughts which are too refined or far-fetched to strike the people; for indeed, what else is it than a brilliant stroke affecting and enlivening a multitude, which, at first view, merely presents to the orator an extended and motionless heap, and which so far from participating the sensations of him who speaks, scarcely grants him a cold and strict attention?

The beginning of a discourse ought to be simple and modest, in order to conciliate to the preacher the good will of his auditory. The exordium, nevertheless, deserves to be studied with the greatest care. It is proper to confine one's self in this part to the unfolding of a single idea which may include the whole extent of the subject. It is here where indications of the plan should be quickly made known; where the leading aim of the discourse should be pointed out without filling up too much room; where lucid principles should discover the deep reflection of the orator who is capable of obtaining at once a commanding influence over all his hearers.*

* "The first quality of an exordium is brevity. This, however, has a proper measure, for as it ought not to be excessively long, so neither should it be too short, the middle way is best. If the exordium were too short, it would oblige the hearer to enter too soon into the matter without preparation enough; and excessive length would weary him; for it is with an auditor as with a man who visits a

Such is the art of Bossuet, when, that he might strike the mind forcibly, he says, at the beginning of his funeral oration for Henrietta, of England, that he will "in one single wo deplore all the calamities, and in one single death show the death and the emptiness of all human grandeur."

Whatever doth not lead toward the principal points of a sermon is useless in an exordium. Let us therefore, in this part of the discourse, avoid subtle reflections, quotations, essays, common places, and even tropes and metaphors.

"We must not then," says the Roman orator, "depart from the familiar sense of words, least our discourse appear prepared with too much labour."* Let us proceed to our design by the shortest course. Every thing here ought to be adapted to the subject, since, according to the expression of Cicero, "The exordium is only its porch," (Aditus ad causam.—*Brutus.*) Let us not imitate those prolix rhetoricians, who, instead of entering at once on their subject, turn and turn again on all sides, leaving their hearers uncertain of the matter which they are going to handle.

The exordium doth not properly begin till the object and design of the discourse are discovered.

palace; he does not like to stay too long in the court, or first avenues, he would only view them transiently without stopping, and proceed as soon as possible to gratify his principal curiosity." (*Robinson's Claude*, vol. ii, p. 469.)

M. Claude farther observes, that an exordium should be clear, cool, and grave; engaging and agreeable; connected with the text or subject to be discussed; simple and unadorned; not common, and sometimes figurative: his illustration of these points well deserves perusal. (*Ibid.*)

* In exordiendâ causâ servandum est ut usitata sit verborum consuetudo, ut non apparata oratio esse videatur. (*Ad. Herrennium*, lib. i, 7.)

SECTION XI.

OF THE EXPLICATION OF THE SUBJECT.

No sooner is the subject stated, than we must hasten to define it. This precaution is to be regarded, especially in treating on metaphysical subjects, such as providence, truth, conscience, &c. He is sure to wander in vague speculations who neglects to be guided, at first, by clear ideas. It is certainly hazardous to rise too much in those preparatory parts; and experience every day teaches us to be distrustful of eloquent introductions.

It is, nevertheless, necessary strongly to fix the attention of a wandering congregation; and I do not see that we violate the rules of art in surprising the hearer by an unexpected stroke which may draw him off from his own thoughts, provided this sudden emotion do not beguile his expectation, and that the orator always proceeds in the enlargement of his subject.

"I want discourses," says Montaigne, "which make an immediate attack upon the strong hold of doubt; I desire good and solid arguments at first sight." Montaigne is right. Nothing is more important and difficult than to become masters of our auditory, and to enter upon our subject with a movement that may affect them.

Seneca opens the first scene of his tragedy of Troy with a sublime soliloquy; and three verses suffice for his immediately interesting every heart. We behold, at a distance, the city of Troy consumed by the flames; and Hecuba, in chains, alone upon the theatre, pronounces, with a sigh, these eloquent expressions, "Ye princes who confide in your power, ye who rule over a numerous court, ye who dread not the inconstant favour of the gods, and ye who indulge yourselves in the soothing repose of

prosperity, behold Hecuba, behold Troy!"* Who does not then retire within himself, and seriously reflect upon the dangers of his fate? It is thus that a great orator should engage the heart. It is thus he should enrich the beginning of his discourse, provided that the sequel deserve also to be heard after the auditors have been elevated to such a pitch.

SECTION XII.

OF THE PRODUCTION OF IDEAS.

It is this continual propagation of great ideas, by which they are mutually enlivened; it is this art of incessantly advancing in composition that gives strength to eloquence, rapidity to discourse, and the whole interest of dialogue to an uninterrupted succession of ideas, which, were they disjointed, would produce no effect, but languish and die.

The progression which imparts increasing strength to each period is the natural representation of those transports of soul which should enliven throughout the compositions of the orator. Hence it follows, that an eloquent writer can only be formed by a fertility and vastness of thought.

Detached phrases, superfluous passages, witty compari-

* Quicumque regno fidit, et magnâ potens,
Dominatur Aulâ, nec leves metuit Deos,
Animumque rebus credulum lætis debit
Me videat et te Troja!

Virgil describes this affecting scene, when he says,

Vidi Hecubam, centumque nurus, Priamumque per aras
Sanguine fœdantem, quos ipse sacraverat, ignes.

Æneid. lib. ii, l, 501.

And again,

Hic Hecuba, et natæ nequicquam altaria circum,
Præcipites atra ceù tempestate columbæ,
Condensæ et divûm amplexæ simulachra tenebant.

L. 515, &c.

sons, unprofitable definitions, the affectation of shining or surprising at every word, the extravagance of genius, these do not enrich but rather impoverish a writer as often as they interrupt his progress.*

Let, then, the orator avoid, as most dangerous rocks, those ensnaring sallies which would diminish the impetuosity of his ardour. Without pity on his productions, and without ever regretting the apparent sacrifices which it will cost him, let him, as he proceeds, retrench this heap of flourishes which stifles his eloquence instead of embellishing it, and which hurries him on forcibly, rather than gracefully, toward his main design.

If the hearer find himself continually where he was; if he discover the enlargement, the return of the same ideas, or the playing upon words, he is no more transported with the admiration of a vehement orator; it is a florid declaimer whom he hears without effect. He does not even hear him long. He also, like the orator, makes idle reflections on every word. He is continually losing sight of the thread of the discourse amidst those digressions of the rhetorician who is aiming to shine while his subject languishes. At length, tired with this redundancy of words, he feels his exhausted attention ready to expire with every breath.

* "The thoughts with which good authors embellish their discourses are plain, natural, and intelligible; they are neither affected nor far-fetched, and, as it were, forced in, in order to make a parade of wit, but always rise out of the subject to be treated of, from which they seem so inseparable, that we cannot think the things could have been otherwise expressed, at the same time that every one imagines he would express them the same way." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, chap. iii, sec. 2, art. ii, p. 106.) See also what Rollin says of *shining thoughts*, vol. ii, p. 126.

So Fenelon tells us that "there is much gained by losing all superfluous ornaments, and confining ourselves to such beauties as are simple, easy, clear, and seemingly negligent." (*Letter to the French Academy*, p. 196.)

See also *Knox's* judicious remarks, *Essays*, No. 15. And *Blair*, *Lect.* xviii, p. 384.

Mistaken man of genius! wert thou acquainted with the true method of attaining eloquence, instead of disgusting thy hearer with thy insipid antithesis, his attention would not be at liberty to be diverted. He would partake of your emotions. He would become all that you mean to describe. He would imagine that he himself could discover the plain and striking arguments which you laid before him, and in some measure compose your discourse along with you. His satisfaction would be at its height, as would be your glory. And you would find that it is the delight of him who hears, which always insures the triumph of him who speaks.*

* "What formed the distinct character of Father Massillon's eloquence was, that all his strokes aimed directly at the heart, so that what was simply reason and proof in others, was feeling in his mouth. He not only convinced, he affected, moved, and melted his hearers. He did not confine himself to discover only the injustice and unreasonableness of vice; he showed it in such a hideous and hateful light, that you could no longer suffer yourself to be under the empire of such a cruel tyrant; you could no longer consider it in any other light than that of a sworn enemy of your felicity. Entering into a holy indignation against yourself, you would appear to yourself so blind, so unjust, so miserable, that you would see no other remedy than that of falling into the arms of virtue. Sermons composed in this taste cannot fail of being heard with extreme attention; every one sees himself in the lively and natural pictures in which the preacher paints the human heart, and discovers its most secret springs of action. Every one imagines the discourse is addressed to him, and thinks the orator meant him only. Hence the remarkable effects of his instructions: nobody after hearing him, stopped to praise, or criticise his sermon. Each auditor retired in a pensive silence, with a thoughtful air, downcast eyes, and composed countenance, carrying away the arrow which the Christian orator had fastened in his heart. These silent suffrages exceed the loudest applauses. When Father Massillon had preached his first advent at Versailles, Louis XIV. said these remarkable words to him:—*Father, I have heard many fine orators in my chapel, and have been much pleased with them; but as for you, always when I have heard you, I have been very much displeased with myself.* A finished encomium, which does equal honour to the taste and piety of the monarch, and the talents of the preacher." (*Preface to Massillon's Sermons.*)

"A good judge of the art of oratory," says Cicero, "need not hear an orator in order to judge of his merits. He passes on; he observes the judges conversing together —restless on their seats—frequently inquiring in the middle of a pleading whether it be not time to close the trial and break up the court. This is enough for him. He perceives at once that the cause is not pleaded by a man of eloquence who can command every mind, as a musician can produce harmonious strains by touching the strings of his instrument.

"But if he perceive, as he passes on, the same judges attentive—their heads erect—their looks engaged, and apparently struck with admiration of the speaker, as a bird is charmed with the sweet sounds of music; if above all, he discover them most passionately affected by pity, by hatred, or by any strong emotion of the heart; if, I say, as he passes on, he perceive these effects, though he hear not a word of the oration, he immediately concludes that a real orator is in this assembly, and that the work of eloquence proceeds, or rather is already accomplished."*

As a confirmation of this account of Massillon's eloquence, Voltaire tells us that when he was preaching that sermon entitled, "the small number of the elect," and which he considers as equal to any thing of which either ancient or modern times can boast, toward the close of the discourse the whole assembly were moved; by a sort of involuntary motion they started up from their seats; and such indications of surprise and acclamations were manifested as disconcerted the speaker, while they imparted an increased effect to his discourse. (*Encyclopedia, art. Eloquence.*)

* Itaque intelligens dicendi existimator non assidens et attentè audiens, sed uno adspectu et præteriens de oratore sæpè judicat. Videt oscitantem judicem, loquentem cum altero, nonnunquàm etiam circulantem, mittentem adhoram; quæsitor em ut dimittat rogantem; intelligit oratorem in er causâ non adesse qui possit animis judicum admovere orationem tanquàm fidibus manum. Idem si præteriens adspexerit, erectos intuentes judices, ut avem cantu aliquo, sic illos viderit oratione quasi suspensos teneri; aut id quod moxime opus est, misericordiâ, odio, motu animi aliquo perturbatos esse vehe-

SECTION XIII.

OF THE ELOQUENCE OF THE BAR.

THE bar is an excellent school for imparting that rhetorical propagation to ideas, which is one of the most difficult secrets in the arts of oratory.

I have attended the courts: I have heard some eloquent advocates, and a great number of those flippant orators, whom Cicero styles "not orators, but practitioners of a great volubility of speech."*

I acknowledge, however, that I have often admired advocates, indifferent enough in other respects, who possessed, in the highest degree, the valuable talent of arranging their proofs methodically, and of imparting progressive energy to the reasoning. This kind of merit, as usual at the bar, as it is scarce every where else, is also much less remarked there; whether it be reserved to gentlemen of the profession to be thoroughly sensible of its value in the opening of a cause; or whether it be that arguments becoming more gradually forcible in juridical discussions, an adherence to the natural order is sufficient for the pleader to state them to advantage.†

mentiùs: ea si præteriens, ut dixi, adspexerit, si nihil audierit, tamen oratorem versari in illo judicio, et oratorium fieri aut perfectum jam esse profectò entelligit.

* Non oratores, sed operarios linguâ celeri et exercitatâ. (*Brutus*, 18, 83.)

† "The best advice," says M. Rollin, "that can be given to young people who are designed for the bar, is to take for the model of their style, the solid foundation of Demosthenes, embellished with the graces of Cicero, so that the severity of the former may be softened by the graces of the latter; and that the conciseness and vivacity of Demosthenes may correct the luxuriancy, and perhaps the too loose way of writing with which Cicero is reproached." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, ch. iii, sec. 3, art. ii, p. 262–266.)

See the various useful remarks of the same author on the eloquence of the bar, vol. ii, ch. iii, sect. 3, throughout.

There are, at this time, the most distinguished talents at the bar: but there hath been a complaint for a long while, and justly, of a sad declension.*

The Chancellor D'Aguesseau, who, in discharging the functions of his public employment, hath acquired the greatest renown in this age, is universally esteemed a man of extraordinary abilities; a profound lawyer; a correct and elegant writer. But I am not aware that the public opinion allows him the same superiority as an orator, although he hath handled many subjects worthy of the highest strains of eloquence. This illustrious magistrate was not as yet possessed of all the strength of his genius when he employed himself on subjects of a rhetorical nature; and it would be doing him injustice to judge of his talents by a small number of discourses which were the earliest productions of his youth.

Advocates, in general, do not take sufficient pains with their causes. They are more copious than vehement; and many of them sacrifice glory to vanity, by lengthening out their pleadings, that they may engross more attention from a public audience.

But it is not enough to show one's self; it is necessary to be held in admiration when one wishes to become celebrated.

Nor ought it to be concealed, that literary men who are accustomed to write with more care, have a marked superiority over advocates, whenever they assume their profession.

Neither Le Maitre nor Patru† occupy the first place

* Mr. Knox finds occasion to observe, that "the eloquence of the bar is greatly degenerated from that liberal oratory which immortalized Cicero."—See his strictures on this subject in his *Liberal Education*, sec. xx, p. 189.

† "Patru was the first," says Voltaire, "who introduced correctness and purity of language in pleadings." He obtained the reputation of a most exact speaker and excellent writer, and was esteemed so

in the French bar. This honour is reserved for Pelisson,* who hath deserved immortal fame by composing his memoirs for the superintendent Fouquet: but above all for Arnaud, who hath himself surpassed all advocates in "The Apology for the English Catholics," accused of a conspiracy against King Charles II. in 1678. Read that eloquent discussion. What tears will not Arnaud draw from you upon the death of the virtuous Viscount Stafford! An orator, without attempting to be one, he does not discover any design to affect you: but, by the simple recital of facts, merely by logical arguments, by the depositions of the witnesses upon which the Catholics were condemned, he irrefragably proves their innocence, he moves your compassion for the fate of the unfortunate persons, whose misfortunes he recounts, and he stamps with perpetual infamy the memory of the famous Oates, who invented that absurd calumny.† Never was moral demonstration

perfectly knowing in grammar and his own language that all his decisions were submitted to as oracles. Born 1604, died 1681.—(*Biog. Dictionary.*)

* Pelisson composed three famous pleadings on behalf of Fouquet, who had been his patron, and superintendent of the finances, but afterward disgraced. Voltaire says, "they resemble those of the Roman orator, the most of any thing in the French language. They are like many of Cicero's orations; a mixture of judicial and state affairs, treated with an art void of ostentation, and with all the ornaments of an affecting eloquence." (*Gen. Biog. Dict.*)

"Pelisson was one of the finest geniuses of the seventeenth century. He excited the admiration of all around him: his "Preface to the Works of Sarrasin," is reckoned a masterpiece in its way. "He was," says Voltaire, "an indifferent poet, but a man of great eloquence and learning." (*New Biog. Dict.*)

† M. Maury expresses himself like a zealous Catholic. It must, at the same time, be owned, that much of the virulence of party animosity between Protestants and Papists distinguished the transactions of the reign of Charles II. The trial and conviction of the Jesuits and of Stafford, with all the concomitant circumstances attending these events, have given rise to a difference of opinion respecting the innocence or guilt of that unfortunate nobleman. Without

carried farther. Nor ought we to forget that in this work Arnaud justifies the Jesuits whom he hated, and defends their cause with a zeal as noble as affecting.

It were doubtless to be wished that this celebrated Arnaud had always selected subjects equally proper for the display of his talents. He was only in his twenty-eighth year, when Des Cartes consulted him on his "Physical Meditations," and was astonished at the depth of his genius. He was born with the spirit of a warrior. The works he composed were chiefly polemical. But he deserves to be ranked among the most eloquent men of his age. We know that he was a most profound grammarian, and that he equalled Malbranche in metaphysics. Boileau esteemed him as his oracle in poetry; he remained constantly attached to him notwithstanding his long misfortunes; and afterward rendered homage to the merit of this illustrious exile, in his epitaph for Bourdaloue, whom he styles, "after Arnaud, the most illustrious man in France."*

deciding on the subject, the reader is referred to *Hume's History of England;* also to *Titus Oates's Narrative of the Popish Plot*, with other tracts on the same subject, 1679.

* After this brief sketch of the eloquence of French advocates, it will afford the reader no unpleasing comparison if he turn his thoughts to the English bar. The editor confesses that he should deem it a reflection on the gentlemen of the learned profession, were he to circumscribe the number of eloquent men among them within as narrow bounds as the abbe does those of his nation.

The English bar has long continued to be a school for eloquence. There, some of our greatest statesmen and parliamentary orators have been formed for eminence. While the names of Harcourt, Hardwicke, Blackstone, and others, are left on record, and such men who still exist are mentioned, as Mansfield, Thurlow, Loughborough, Pitt, Erskine, and others, the reputation of the English bar is secured, and the noblest patterns are presented for the imitation and laudable emulation of others of the same learned body who are rising into public notice and estimation.

SECTION XIV.

OF CICERO.

It would be a vain attempt to excuse the distance so perceptible between the advocates of the French bar, and the orators of the Roman senate, by suggesting the different interests which were entrusted to them. Cicero, I know, has sometimes had the glory of being styled "the defender of the republic;" but did he not often undertake causes of less importance? and are not most of his orations devoted to the affairs of his fellow-citizens? This great man wanted not an extraordinary auditory in order to display all the riches of his genius. He was more eloquent when he pleaded before the Roman people, than when he spoke in the presence of Cesar.

His oration for Ligarius is written in a charming style; but it is not considered as the most eloquent of his works. Cicero requests the life of Ligarius, of an usurper, as if he were imploring the clemency of a lawful sovereign. The commendations which he lavishes on Cesar in the ingenious conclusion of his speech, seem to justify the reproaches which he received from the Stoic Brutus, after the death of the dictator, in that famous letter where Brutus accuses him of flattering Octavius, and which is justly ranked among the chief productions of antiquity.

It is in his orations against Verres; against Cataline; in his second Philippic; in the conclusions of all his speeches; it is in his treatises of "the Orator," and "of illustrious Orators," that we find the eloquence of Cicero. All his writings ought to be the manual of Christian orators.

The rapidity with which he composed his immortal discourses, notwithstanding the multiplicity and importance of the concerns which oppressed him, did not prevent him from bestowing on his style a perfection so uncommon,

that it is as easy to understand his orations, as it is difficult, and perhaps even impossible to translate them well. His example evidently proves that our advocates should not justify their inattention to elocution by the inevitable avocations of their profession.

It was during a very short interval, and amidst the agitation of a civil war, that Cicero published his famous orations against Mark Antony, which he called his Philippics.

We are at a loss to conceive how he could retain sufficient freedom of mind, after the death of Cesar, and in the sixty-fourth and last year of his life, to compose those fourteen discourses with which he finished his rhetorical career.

Brutus, whose taste was as severe as were his morals, openly disapproved, in the writings of the Roman orator, of this inexhaustible exuberance, this copiousness, always elegant and harmonious, which sometimes, perhaps, enervated his vigour; and he told Cicero himself that his eloquence wanted reins. Posterity hath thought with Brutus.*

* Of Cicero Archbishop Fenelon makes the following remarks in his Dialogues: he observes that "Tully said there were very few complete orators who knew how to seize and captivate the heart," and he owns that even this orator was sometimes deficient in this respect, as the rhetorical flowers with which he embellished his harangues were more calculated to amuse the fancy than to touch the heart: he observes farther, that we should distinguish between those orations which Tully composed in his youth, (and which have frequently this defect, while they discover much of his moving and persuading art,) and those harangues which he made in his more advanced age, for the necessities of the republic. In these he displays the utmost efforts of his eloquence. He is artless and vehement. With a negligent air he delivers the most natural and affecting sentiments, and says every thing that can move and animate the passions.—(*Fenelon's Dialogue* ii, p. 52, 54.)

Cicero, as an orator, is thus characterized by Dr. Blair:—"In all his orations there is high art. He begins generally with a regular

It is not, surely, to be ascribed to any principle of taste, but to the fear of displeasing Augustus, who had shamefully sacrificed his benefactor Cicero, that Virgil and Horace were cowardly enough never to make mention in their poetry of this orator, as celebrated in the present day as is Rome itself. Virgil, especially, ought not to have forgotten him when celebrating the privileges of the Roman people. But the assassin of Cicero was upon the throne: and the courtly poet did not scruple to make a sacrifice to Augustus of one of the most glorious monu-

exordium; and with much preparation and insinuation prepossesses the hearers, and studies to gain their affections. His method is clear, and his arguments are arranged with great propriety. His method is indeed more clear than that of Demosthenes, and this is one advantage which he has over him: we find every thing in its proper place. He never attempts to move till he has endeavoured to convince; and in moving, especially the softer passions, he is very successful. No man that ever wrote, knew the power and force of words better than Cicero. He rolls them along with the greatest beauty and pomp; and, in the structure of his sentences, is curious and exact to the highest degree. He is always full and flowing, never abrupt. He is a great amplifier of every subject; magnificent, and in his sentiments highly moral. Though his manner is, on the whole, diffuse, yet it is often happily varied, and suited to the subject. When a great public object roused his mind, and demanded indignation and force, he departs considerably from that loose and declamatory manner to which he inclines at other times, and becomes exceedingly cogent and vehement. This great orator, however, is not without his defects. In most of his orations there is too much art, even carried to the length of ostentation. He seems often to aim at obtaining admiration, rather than at operating conviction. Hence, on some occasions, he is showy rather than solid; and diffuse, where he ought to have been pressing. His sentences are, at all times, round and sonorous; they cannot be accused of monotony, for they possess variety of cadence; but from too great a study of magnificence, he is sometimes deficient in strength. Though the services which he had performed to his country were very considerable, yet he is too much his own panegyrist. Ancient manners, which imposed fewer restraints on the side of decorum, may, in some degree, excuse, but cannot entirely justify his vanity." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 28.)

ments of his country, in yielding the palm of eloquence to the orators of Greece in preference to the consul of Rome. Orabunt (alii) melius causas, &c.*

SECTION XV.

OF DEMOSTHENES.

NOTWITHSTANDING the decision of Virgil, learned men have not passed judgment unanimously between Cicero and Demosthenes. These two orators hold nearly an equal rank.†

* The passage referred to by our author is to be found in Æneid, lib. vii, l. 849, and stands thus in connection :—

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra :
Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus ;
Orabunt causas melius, &c.
Tu regere imperio populos. Romane, momento,
Hæ tibi erunt artes ; pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

IN ENGLISH.

"Let others better mould the running mass
Of metals, and inform the breathing brass,
And soften into flesh a marble face :
Plead better at the bar, &c.
But Rome, 'tis thine alone with awful sway
To rule mankind and make the world obey ;
Disposing peace and war thy own majestic way.
To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free :
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee!"

DRYDEN.

† The opinions of learned men have indeed been various, as M. Maury intimates, respecting the intrinsic and relative merits of Cicero and Demosthenes. Out of a variety which might be mentioned, the following observations are selected :—

Quintillian says, "Quorum ego virutes plerasque arbitror similes, consilium, ordinem dividendi, præparandi, probandi rationem ; omnia denique, quæ sunt inventionis. In eloquendo est aliqua diversitas ; densior ille, (Demosthenes) hic (Cicero) copiosior : ille concludit adstrictius ; hic latius pugnat : ille acumine semper ; hic frequenter

Cicero hath an unquestionable advantage over his rival in literature and philosophy, but he hath not wrested from him the sceptre of eloquence. He himself regarded Demosthenes as his master. He praised him with all the

et pondere; illi nihil detrahi potest: huic nihil adjici; curæ plus in hoc; in illo naturæ—cedendum vero in hoc quidem, quod ille et prior fuit, et ex magna parte Ciceronem, quantus est, fecit. Nam mihi videtur M. Tullius cum se totum ad imitationem Græcorum contulisset, effinxisse vim Demosthenis, copiam Platonis jucunditatem Isocratis." (*Quint.* lib. x, c. 1.)

Longinus, also, draws the following comparison on this subject, when he says to this effect: "My dear Terentianus, Cicero himself differs not in any respect more than in what I have mentioned, from Demosthenes; Demosthenes is concisely, Cicero is diffusely, sublime. Demosthenes, who burns and bears down all before him with an irresistible violence, rapidity, strength, and fury, may be compared to a hurricane or thunderbolt: but Cicero's eloquence, I apprehend, resembles some overwhelming conflagration, that spreads and destroys all before it, retains an intense and inextinguishable heat, breaks out in different forms in different places, and is nourished by inexhaustible supplies of fuel."*

Fenelon passes a similar judgment with Quintillian: "I will go farther, and am not afraid to say that I think Demosthenes a greater orator than Cicero. I protest there is no man admires Cicero more than I do. He embellishes every thing he handles. He is an honour to speech; and makes that happy use of words that no one else could. He has a vast variety of wit. He is even concise and vehement when he designs to be so against Cataline, Verres, and Antony. But we may perceive some finery in his discourses. His art is wonderful; but still we discern it. While he is concerned for the safety of the republic, he does not forget that he is an orator, nor does he let others forget it."

"Demosthenes seems transported, and to have nothing in view but his country. He does not study what is beautiful, but naturally falls

* Φιλαττε Τερεντιανε, και ὁ Κικερων τω Δημοσθενης εν τοις μεγεθεσι παραλλαττει. Ὁ μεν γαρ εν υψει το πλεον αποτομω, ὁ δε Κικερων εν χυσει· και ὁ μεν ημετερος δια το μετα βιας εκαρα, ετι δε ταχυς, ρωμες δεινοτητος, διον καιειν τι αμα και διαρταζειν, σκηπτω τινι παρεικαζοιτ' αν η κεραυνω· ὁ δε Κικερων, ὡς αμφιλαφης τις εμπρησμος (οιμαι) παντη νεμεται, και ανειλειται, πολυ εχων και ετινομον αει το καιον, και διακληρονομω μενον αλλοτ' αλλοιως εν αυτω, και κατα διαδοχας ανατ εφομενον. (*Longin. de sublimitate*, sec. 12.)

enthusiasm of the liveliest imagination. He translated his works; and, if his translations had reached us, it is probable that Cicero would have placed himself for ever below Demosthenes.

into it without reflecting. He is above admiration. He uses speech as a modest man does his clothes, only to cover himself. He thunders; he lightens: he is like a torrent that hurries every thing along with it. We cannot criticise him, for he is master of our passions. We consider the things he says, and not his words. We lose sight of him: we think of Philip only who usurps every thing. I am charmed with these two orators; but I confess that Tully's prodigious art, and magnificent eloquence affect me less than the vehement simplicity of Demosthenes." (*Fenelon's Letter to the French Academy*, section iv, p. 182.)—See also the parellel which this author draws between the two orators, in his *Dialogues of the Dead*, i, and ii.

M. Rollin, remarking on this passage, says, "These reflections of the archbishop are extremely rational and judicious; and the closer we examine his opinion, the more we find it comformable to good sense, right reason, and the most exact rules of true rhetoric. But whoever would take upon him to prefer Demosthenes' orations to those of Cicero, ought, in my opinion, to possess pretty near as much solidity, force, and elevation of mind, as Demosthenes must have had to compose them. Whether it be owing to an old prepossession in favour of an author we have constantly read from our tender years; or that we are accustomed to a style which agrees more with our manners, and is more adapted to our capacities, we cannot be persuaded to prefer the severe austerity of Demosthenes to the insinuating softness of Cicero; and we choose to follow our own inclination and taste for an author, who is, in some measure, our friend and acquaintance, rather than to declare, upon the credit of another, in favour of one that is almost a stranger to us." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, ch. iii, sec. 3, p. 261.)

Mr. Hume joins with those critics who give the preference to Demosthenes. Speaking of the charms of Cicero's eloquence, he says, Some objections I own, notwithstanding his vast success, may lie against some passages of the Roman orator. He is too florid and rhetorical; his figures are too striking and palpable: the divisions of his discourse are drawn chiefly from the rules of the schools; and his wit disdains not always the artifice even of pun, a rhyme, or jingle of words. The Grecian addressed himself to an audience much less refined than the Roman senate or judges. The lowest vulgar of Athens were his sovereigns, and the arbiters of his eloquence. Yet

It is the irrefragable force of the reasoning; it is the irresistible rapidity of the rhetorical movements, which characterize the eloquence of the Athenian orator. When he writes, it is to give strength, energy, and vehemence to his thoughts. He speaks, not as an elegant writer who wishes to be admired, but as a passionate man tormented by truth; as a citizen menaced with the greatest misfortunes, and who can no longer contain the transports of his indignation against the enemies of his country.

He is the champion of reason. He defends her with all the strength of his genius; and the rostrum where he speaks becomes the place of combat. He at once conquers his auditors, his adversaries, his judges. He does not seem to endeavour to move you: hear him however, and he shall cause you to weep upon reflection. He

is his manner more chaste and austere than that of the other. Could it be copied, its success would be infallible over a modern assembly. It is rapid harmony, exactly adjusted to the sense; it is vehement reasoning, without any appearance of art: it is disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, involved in a continued stream of argument. And of all human productions the orations of Demosthenes present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection." (*Hume's Essays*, xii, vol. i, p. 120, 121.

Mr. Knox observes, that "many critics have employed their talents in making comparisons between Demosthenes and Tully. All of them agree in attributing to the former conciseness, and to the latter diffusion; and according to this judgment, they have not hesitated to give the preference to the Athenian. The concise vehemence of Demosthenes carried all before it by violence; the prolixity of Cicero gained ground by the soft arts of insinuation. The effect of the former was sudden and irresistible; that of the latter, comparatively weak and dilatory." (*Knox's Essays*, vol. i, No. 44, p. 204.)

Dr. Blair shall bring up the rear in the list of those critics who have compared Cicero and Demosthenes: "The character of the latter is vigour and austerity; that of Cicero is gentleness and insinuation. In the one you find more manliness; in the other more ornament. The one is more harsh, but more spirited and cogent; the other more agreeable, but withal, looser and weaker. (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 30.)

overwhelms his fellow-citizens with reproaches; but, then, these are only the interpreters of their own remorse.

Doth he refute an argument? He does not discuss it. He proposes a single question for the whole answer, and the objection no longer appears.

Doth he wish to stir up the Athenians against Philip? It is no more an orator who speaks; it is a general; it is a king; it is a prophet; it is the tutelar angel of his country. And when he threatens his fellow citizens with slavery, we think that we hear from a distance the noise approaching of the rattling chains which the tyrant is bringing them.

The philippics of Demosthenes, and his famous oration, "pro corona," in favour of Ctesiphon, are justly admired; but I apprehend that the learned, and Christian orators, read but little of his other works; his discourse on the peace, his first and second Olynthiac, his oration of Chersonesus, and many other masterly productions truly worthy of his genius. In these too much forgotten writings, and which seem to be of no service to the reputation of Demosthenes, we might be able to find sufficient claims to justify his fame, were all his other productions of oratory unknown.

It is enough to repeat here one single passage.

The enemies of Demosthenes (certain writers without talents, Æschines excepted, who presumed to consider themselves as his rivals because they set themselves up for orators in Athens) accused him of seeking, in his discourses, rather his own reputation, than the public good. This great man, abused for a long while without complaining, deigned at length to confute their clamours in the presence of all the Athenian people, He thus addresses them in his oration of Chersonesus:—

"I am so far from regarding all those contemptible orators as citizens deserving of their country, that should any one say to me this moment, and thou, Demosthenes,

what sevices hast thou rendered to the republic? I would neither, O Athenians, speak of the expenses I have incurred on behalf of my fellow-citizens in the discharge of my employments, nor of the captives whom I have redeemed, nor of the gifts which I have presented to the city, nor of all the monuments which will one day testify my zeal for my country; but this is the answer I should make: My conduct hath always been the reverse of the maxims of these orators. I could, doubtless, have followed their example, and like them, have flattered you. But I have always sacrificed my personal advantage, my ambition, and even the desire of pleasing you. I have addressed you so as to rank myself below other citizens, and to exalt you above the other people of Greece. O Athenians! permit me now to bear this witness of myself. No: I never indulged the expectation of attaining the first place among you, were I even to make you the lowest of mankind."

It is to those enemies, and to the sad necessity of crushing them with all the weight of his genius and virtue, that Demosthenes is indebted for this sublime passage, one of the finest strokes of his eloquence.

It would be very easy to multiply similar quotations, when speaking of this orator. But it is not my design to prevent public speakers from reading him. I invite them, on the contrary, to learn him by heart; and to transfuse his energy, his vigour, and his colouring, into their own eloquence.*

* The archbishop of Cambray gives us his sentiments of Demosthenes, in the following terms: "Demosthenes moves, warms, and captivates the heart. He was too sensibly touched with the interest of his country, to mind the little glittering fancies of Isocrates. Every oration of Demosthenes is a close chain of reasoning, that represents the generous notions of a soul who disdains any thought that is not great. His discourses gradually increase in force by greater light and new reasons, which are always illustrated by bold figures and lively images. One cannot but see that he has the good

SECTION XVI.

OF BOSSUET.

At the very name of Demosthenes, my admiration reflects on the most eloquent man of my nation, who bears the greatest resemblance to him of all his competitors.

of the republic entirely at heart, and that nature itself speaks in all his transports; for his artful address is so masterly that it never appears. Nothing ever equalled the force and vehemence of his discourses." (*Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, Dial. i, p. 20.)

M. Rollin paints the character of this orator by the following extract of the sentiments of Quintilian and Dion. Halicarnassus: "Demosthenes, among orators, is the standard, which every one must necessarily follow who aspires to true eloquence. His style is so strong, so close, and nervous, it is every where so just, so exactly concise, that there is nothing too much or too little. What distinguishes the eloquence of Demosthenes, is, the impetuosity of the expression, the choice of words, and the beauty of the disposition; which being supported throughout, and accompanied with force and sweetness, keeps the attention of the judges perpetually fixed. Æschines, indeed, is bright and solid; he enlarges and amplifies, but is often close; so that his style, which at first seems only flowing and sweet, discovers itself upon a nearer view to be vehement and emphatic, in which Demosthenes surpasses him."

M. Rollin then refers us to Cicero's celebrated judgment of Demosthenes, (Orat. n. 23 et 104, et ep. ad Brut. n. 35,) and to the sentiments of M. de Toureil, after which he gives us his own, as follow:—

"What is there, then, in his orations that is so admirable, and has forced away the universal and unanimous applause of all ages? Is Demosthenes an orator who amuses himself barely with tickling the ear, by the sound and harmony of periods; or does he impose upon the mind by a florid style and shining thoughts? Such eloquence may, indeed, dazzle and charm, the moment we hear it; but the impression it makes is of a short duration. What we admire in Demosthenes, is the plan, the series, and the order and disposition of the oration; it is the strength of the proofs, the solidity of the arguments, the grandeur and nobleness of the sentiments, and of the style; the vivacity of the turns and figures; in a word, the wonderful art of representing the subjects he treats in all their lustre, and displaying them in all their strength. But that which distinguishes Demosthenes still more, and in which no one has imitated him, is,

Such, whom we may consider as one of these orators, whom Cicero styles "vehement, and, in some measure,

that he forgets himself so entirely; is always so scrupulous in avoiding every thing that might look like a show or parade of wit and genius; and so careful to make the auditor attend to the cause, and not to the orator, that no expression, turn, or thought ever escape him, which are calculated merely to shine. This reservedness, this moderation, in so fine a genius as Demosthenes, and on topics so susceptible of graces and elegance, raises his merit to its highest pitch, and is superior to all encomiums." (*Rollin*, v. ii, c. iii, sec. iii, p. 251–2.)

Dr. Blair makes the following remarks on the style of Demosthenes:—"His orations are strongly animated; and full of the impetuosity and fire of public spirit. They proceed in a continued strain of inductions, consequences, and demonstrations, founded on sound reason. The figures which he uses are never sought after; but always rise from the subject. He employs them sparingly indeed; for splendour are not the distinctions of this orator's composition. It is an energy of thought peculiar to himself, which forms his character, and sets him above all others. He attends much more to things than to words. We forget the orator, and think of the business. He warms the mind, and impels to action. He has no parade and ostentation; no methods of insinuation; no laboured introductions; but is like a man full of his subject, who, after preparing his audience by a sentence or two for hearing plain truths, enters directly on business. The style of Demosthenes is strong and concise, though sometimes, it must not be dissembled, harsh and abrupt. His words are very expressive; his arrangement firm and manly; and far from being unmusical. Negligent of lesser graces, he seems rather to have aimed at that sublime which lies in sentiment. His action and pronunciation are recorded to have been uncommonly vehement and ardent; which, from the manner of his composition, we are naturally led to believe. The character which one forms of him, from reading his works, is of the austere, rather than the gentle kind. He is, on every occasion, grave, serious, passionate; takes every thing on a high tone; never lets himself down, nor attempts any thing like pleasantry. If any fault can be found to his admirable eloquence, it is, that he sometimes borders on the hard and dry. He may also be thought to want smoothness and grace. But these defects are far more than compensated by that admirable and masterly force of masculine eloquence, which, as it overpowered all who heard it, cannot, at this day, be read without emotion." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 21, 22, 23.)

tragical."* Such, who transported with an impassioned eloquence, rises superior to rules and models, and advances the art to all the elevation of his peculiar genius. An orator, who ascends to the height of heaven, whence he descends with his expanded mind to sit upon the side of a tomb, and to pull down the pride of princes and kings before God, who, after distinguishing them for a moment upon earth, confounds them for ever in the common dust. A writer, who frames for himself a language as new as his ideas; who imparts to his expressions such a character of energy, that the reader supposes he hears him; and gives to his style such a majesty of elocution, that the idiom he makes use of seems to transform and improve itself under his pen. An apostle, who instructs the world, while celebrating the most illustrious of his contemporaries, making them become, even from their graves, the preachers of all ages; who, in bewailing the death of one single man, clearly shows the vanity of mankind. An orator, in fine, whose discourses, animated by a most glowing and original genius, are classic works in eloquence, which ought to be perpetually studied; just as, in the arts, one goes to Rome to form his taste by the master-pieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo.

Behold the French Demosthenes! Behold Bossuet!

We may apply to his rhetorical writings the panegyric which Quintilian ascribed to the Jupiter of Phidias, when he said, that this statue had increased the religion of the people.

Bossuet hath been, in Europe, the real former of the eloquence of the pulpit. Lingendes, who might have laid claim to a share of this honour, wrote his sermons in Latin, and consequently was not of more use than Cicero to the preachers of the age of Louis XIV.

Bossuet fixed the boundaries of the art in the funeral oration: and it is a singularity worthy of being remarked,

* Grandis, et, ut ita dicam, tragicus orator. (*Brutus*, 203.)

that, at the age of fifty-eight, he finished his rhetorical labours by his master-piece, the panegyric of the great Condé.

I shall say nothing here of his sermons. I have borne sufficient testimony elsewhere* to the lively admiration

* The Abbe refers to a separate dissertation of his, entituled "Reflexions sur les Sermons nouveaux de M. Bossuet;" in which work he introduces the highest eulogiums on his favourite author. As a specimen, the reader is presented with the following comparison: "As Bossuet formerly read Homer, that he might be inflamed with the charming descriptions of this poet; with the same assurance should we read the sermons of Bossuet, when, after long application to study, we have need to have our fatigued imagination re-animated." (p. 231.)

Bishop Atterbury, during his exile in France, and in the course of his epistolary correspondence with his friends in England, expresses his opinion of Bossuet in the following strong terms:—

"Of what I have read since I came on this side of the water, I have conceived a much greater opinion of the bishop of Meaux than I had while in England, and give him readily the preference of all those writers of the Church of France with which I am acquainted. He is a universal genius, and manages every thing he takes in hand like a master. Good sense and sound reflections attend all he says; which is expressed in the most agreeable and beautiful manner, without any of the pomp or paint of false oratory. He has particularly the secret of knowing not only what to say, but what not to say;—the hardest task even of the most exact and excellent writers! I really prefer his funeral orations to those of Flechier and Bourdaloue; though I think he would have written still better had he imitated them less; for by that means he now and then heightens his expression a little too much, and becomes unnatural." (*Letter* xiv.) In another letter, he says, "The more I read of the bishop of Meaux the more I value him as a great and able writer, and particularly for that talent of taking as many advantages of an adversary, and giving him as few, as any man, I believe, that ever entered the lists of controversy. There is a serious warmth in all he says, and his manner of saying it is noble and moving." (See *Atterbury's Epistolary Correspondence, and General Dictionary*, vol. ii, p. 444. n.)

Dr. Blair passes the following encomium on Bossuet: "The most nervous and sublime of all the French orators is the famous bishop of Meaux; in whose *Oraisons Funebres*, there is a very high degree of oratory." (Vol. ii, p. 237.)

which they have excited in me; and I take pleasure in renewing the declaration, because I love always to revive the homage which is due to genius.

Before him, Maillard, Menot, Corenus, Valladier, and a multitude of other French preachers, whose names, at this day, are obscure or ridiculous, had disgraced the eloquence of the pulpit by a wretched style, a barbarous erudition, a preposterous mythology, low buffoonery, and, even sometimes, by obscene details.

Bossuet appeared.

Accustomed to find himself engaged in controversy, he was, perhaps, indebted to the critical observations of the Protestants, who narrowly watched him, for that elevated strain, that strength of reasoning, that union of logic and eloquence, which distinguished all his discourses.

Do you wish to know the revolution which he effected in the pulpit? Open the writings of Bourdaloue, of whom he was the forerunner and model. Yes; Bossuet never appears to me greater than when I read Bourdaloue, who, twenty years afterward, entered this new road, where he had the skill to show himself an original by imitating him, and in which he surpassed him in labour, without being capable of equalling him in genius.

Do you wish to select in more remote times another object of comparison? Place Bossuet among the most illustrious orators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Compare the discourse which he delivered on the day of the opening of the famous assembly of the clergy in 1682,* with the sermon which the bishop of Bitonto preached the third Sunday in Advent, 1546, at the opening

* Bossuet's sermon, on this occasion, was preached from Num. xxiv, 5, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" His great object was to inflame the assembly with a fiery zeal for the extirpation of the reformed religion in France. To this succeeded "Circular Letters of the Assembly," and in 1685, the famous "Revocation of the Edict of Nantz." (*Robinson's Life of Claude*, p. 42, &c.)

of the council of Trent. You would imagine that between the bishop of Bitonto and the bishop of Meaux, there had elapsed an interval of many ages. There is not, however, the difference of a century and a half. But these two periods, so near to each other, are divided by all the distance which removes the grossest barbarism from the most refined taste.

We have, in the edition of the council of Trent, published at Louvaine in 1567, all the sermons which were delivered in the different sessions, before that assembly. There are some funeral orations, and more than thirty other discourses, which were preached by the bishops, by the doctors of the faculty of Paris, or by the monks. That of the bishop of Bitonto is the only one which hath retained some celebrity; and as it is evidently the best of all, it is by this piece that we are enabled to judge of the eloquence of the sixteenth century.

This sermon contains some beauties of oratory; but it is written without method or taste, and sometimes presents an indecent mixture of sacred Scripture and heathen mythology.

The bishop of Bitonto says, "That nature hath given us two hands, two eyes, and two feet, in order that man may be a council in epitome while making use of all his members together; for one hand washes the other, and one foot sustains the other."*

* Quemadmodum et ipsa natura, manus nobis geminas, geminosque oculos, pedes item geminos ideò dedisse videtur, ut quasi collecto Concilio homo semper agat, nam et manus manum lavat, pes pedem sustentat. (*Oratio Eb. Bitont.*)

The name of this famed bishop was Cornelio Musso. He was reckoned one of the greatest preachers of his age. Drelincourt mentions that he is called the Chrysostom of the Italians. (*Bayle's Dictionary.*)

See some account of his curious sermon in Father Paul's history of the council of Trent. (B. ii, p. 124, 125.) Also in Jurieu's history.

We might repeat twenty examples of this sort from the same discourse. But there is need of one quotation only, in order to appreciate the merit of an orator, when we make it from Bossuet.

The ever memorable sermon of the bishop of Meaux upon "the unity of the Church," is not thus written.

SECTION XVII.

OF INTERROGATION.

TIME, that destroyer of ill-founded reputation, adds, every day, fresh lustre to the glory of Bossuet. I observe, with pleasure, that this great orator, whose merit hath been for some time attacked among us, is more warmly and universally admired since there has been a renunciation of the depraved taste of the eloquence of words. The vehemence which distinguishes him, as it does Demosthenes, appears to me frequently derived from accumulated interrogations which are equally familiar to each of them.

Indeed, of all the figures of oratory, interrogation is the most overwhelming and rapid. If it be employed in unfolding the principles on which the discourse is established, it spreads over it an inevitable obscurity, and a species of declamation, which disgusts persons of good taste. It is after a clear explanation of the obligations of the Christian religion, that particular details of its moral injunctions, enlivened by this impetuous movement, forcibly strike the hearers, add remorse to conviction, and, if I may so speak, arm law against conscience. It is by earnest and repeated interrogations that the orator proves and attacks, accuses and answers, doubts and affirms, affects and instructs. Is there, in eloquence, a surer way to agitate the human heart than by such questions following one another in rapid succession, to which there is no need of waiting for an answer, because that is unavoidable and uniform? Can we better manage the pride of the guilty,

than by sparing him the disgrace of a direct reproach, at the very time we are informing him of his foibles or his vices? Or say; how can we impart more force to truth, more weight to reason, than by confining ourselves to the simple privilege of interrogating the wicked? By what means can such a one elude the orator, who shuts up all the avenues by which he endeavours to escape from himself? An orator, who makes choice of him as judge, as sole judge, as the private judge, of the recesses of his own heart only, which he cannot mistake? What answer will he return, if the general questions, which he himself converts into so many personal accusations, rush upon him, and gather strength? If, to these evidences, overwhelming to the sinner, there follows a sublime and striking representation, which terrifies his imagination, and causes his thoughts to be greatly confused? Thus resembling a solemn sentence, which the judge proceeds to pronounce upon the guilty, after having first confounded him.

Such is that sublime and famous apostrophe, which Massillon addresses to the Supreme Being, in his sermon, "on the small number of the elect." "O God! where are thine elect?" These words, so plain, spread consternation. Each hearer places himself in that list of reprobates which had preceded this passage. He dares no more reply to the orator, who had, again and again, demanded of him, if he were of the number of the righteous, whose names alone shall be written in the book of life; but, entering with consternation into his own heart, which speaks sufficiently plain by its compunctions, he then imagines that he hears the irrevocable decree of his reprobation.

The eloquent Racine almost always proceeds by interrogations in impassioned scenes; and this figure, which gives such an ardent rapidity to his style, animates and warms all his arguments, none of which are ever cold, flat, or abstracted.

The success of this oratorical figure is infallible in eloquence, when it is properly employed. It is the natural language of a soul deeply affected. If you wish to see an example of it, a famous one now occurs to me.

Every one knows that fine introduction of Cicero, who, unable to express the lively indignation of his patriotic zeal, rushes abruptly upon Cataline, and instantly overwhelms him by the vehemence of his interrogations. "How long, O Cataline, wilt thou abuse our patience? How long shall we continue to be the objects of thy fury? Whither will thy headstrong audacity impel thee? Perceivest thou not the constant watch in the city, the apprehensions of the people, the enraged countenances of the senators, who have discovered thy pernicious designs? Thinkest thou that I know not what passed the last night in the house of Lecca? Hast thou not made a distribution of employments, and parcelled out all Italy with thy accomplices?"*

* Quousque tandem abutere, Catalina, patientiâ nostrâ? Quamdiù etiam, furor iste tuus nos eludet? Quem ed finem sese effrenata jactabit audacia? Nihil-ne te nocturnum præsidium palatü, nihil urbis vigiliæ, nihil timor populi, nihil concur sus honorum omnium, nihil hic muntissimus habendi senatûs locus, nihil horum ora vultusque moverunt? Patere tua consilia non sentis? Quid proximâ nocte egeris, ubi fueris, quos convocaveris, quem nostrûm ignorare arbitraris? &c. (*In Catil. Orat.* 1.)

The intelligent reader will perceive that the above translation is from the French of our author, though not exactly corresponding with the Latin of Cicero. The following is subjoined as a more full and faithful translation of the Roman orator:—

"How long, O Cataline, wilt thou abuse our patience? How long also shall thy madness elude us? Whither will thy ungovernable audacity impel thee? Could neither the nightly garrison of the citadel, nor the watch of the city, nor the general consternation, nor the congress of all good men, nor this strongly fortified place where the senate is held, nor the enraged countenances of those senators, deter thee from thy impious designs? Dost thou not perceive that thy counsels are all discovered? Thinkest thou that there are any of us

Here is eloquence! here is nature! It is by his making use of such language, that the orator dives to the very bottom of the human heart.*

ignorant of thy transactions the past night, the place of rendezvous, thy collected associates?" &c.

* "*Interrogations*," says Dr. Blair, "are passionate figures. They are, indeed, on so many occasions, the native language of passion, that their use is extremely frequent; and, in ordinary conversation, when men are heated, they prevail as much as in the most sublime oratory. The unfigured, literal use of interrogation is to ask a question; but when men are prompted by passion, whatever they would affirm, or deny, with great vehemence, they naturally put in the form of a question; expressing thereby the strongest confidence of the truth of their own sentiment, and appealing to their hearers for the impossibility of the contrary. Thus, in Scripture: 'God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said? And shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken? And shall he not make it good?' Num. xxiii, 19. So Demosthenes, addressing himself to the Athenians: 'Tell me, will you still go about and ask one another, What news? What can be more astonishing news than this, that the man of Macedon makes war upon the Athenians, and disposes of the affairs of Greece? Is Philip dead? No, but he is sick. What signifies it to you whether he be dead or alive? For, if any thing happen to this Philip, you will immediately raise up another.' All this, delivered without interrogation, had been faint and ineffectual; but the warmth and eagerness which this questioning method expresses, awaken the hearers, and strike them with much greater force." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, p. 355, 356.)

"Much to the same purpose we may add those sublime interrogations in the book of Job, where the Almighty is himself the speaker; and that in the eleventh chapter of the same poem: 'Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?' All the energy of this passage would be lost if once divested of the interrogations; should it be said, Thou canst not by searching find out God; Thou canst not find out the Almighty unto perfection: it is high as heaven, and thou canst do nothing; and it is deep as hell, and thou canst know nothing."

SECTION XVIII.

OF THE ELOQUENCE OF M. BRIDAINE.

If there be extant among us any traces of this ancient and energetic eloquence, which is nothing else than the original voice of nature, it is among the missionaries, and in the country, where we must seek for examples. There, some apostolic men, endowed with a vigorous and bold imagination, know no other success than conversions, no other applauses than tears.* Often devoid of taste, they descend, I confess, to burlesque details; but they forcibly strike the senses; their threatenings impress terror; the people listen to them with profit: many among them have sublime strokes; and an orator doth not hear them without advantage, when he is skilful in observing the important effects of his art.

M. Bridaine, the man, who, in the present age, is the most justly celebrated in this way, was born with a popular eloquence, abounding with metaphorical and striking

"Another very happy illustration of the force of this figure may be brought from the speech of St. Paul, Acts xxvi, where, with astonishing effect, he transfers his discourse from Augustus to Agrippa. In verse 26 he speaks of him in the third person, 'The king,' says he, 'knows of those things, before whom also I speak freely.' He then turns abruptly upon him: 'King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?' And immediately answers his own question: 'I know that thou believest.'" "The smoothest eloquence," says Mr. Smith, "the most insinuating complaisance, could never have made such an impression upon Agrippa as this unexpected and pathetic address." (*Smith's Longinus*, p. 93.)

See also upon this head *Gibbon's Rhetoric*, pp. 176, 191.

* "The best applause," says *Dr. Blair*, "which a preacher can receive, arises from the serious and deep impressions, which his discourse leaves on those who hear it. The finest encomium, perhaps, ever bestowed on a preacher, was given by Louis XIV. to the eloquent bishop of Clermont (Massillon)." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 125, 126. See page 34 of this book, note.)

"Docente in ecclesiâ te, non clamor populi, sed gemitus suscitetur; lachrymæ auditorum laudes tuæ sunt." (*Jerom.* ad. *Nepot.*)

expressions; and no one ever possessed, in a higher degree, the rare talent of arresting the attention of an assembled multitude.

He had so fine a voice, as to render credible all the wonders which history relates of the declamation of the ancients, for he was as easily heard by ten thousand people in the open fields, as if he had spoken under the most resounding arch. In all he said, there were observable unexpected strokes of oratory, the boldest metaphors, thoughts sudden, new, and striking, all the marks of a rich imagination, some passages, sometimes even whole discourses, composed with care, and written with an equal combination of taste and animation.

I remember to have heard him deliver the introduction of the first discourse which he preached in the church of St. Sulpice, in 1751. The first company in the capital went out of curiosity to hear him.

Bridaine perceived among the congregation many bishops, and persons of the first rank, as well as a vast number of ecclesiastics. This sight, far from intimidating, suggested to him the following exordium, so far at least as my memory remains, of a passage, with which I have been always sensibly affected, and which, perhaps, will not appear unworthy of Bossuet, or Demosthenes.

"At the sight of an auditory so new to me, methinks, my brethren, I ought only to open my mouth to solicit your favour in behalf of a poor missionary, destitute of all those talents which you require of those who speak to you about your salvation. Nevertheless, I experience to-day, a feeling very different. And, if I am cast down, suspect me not of being depressed by the wretched uneasiness occasioned by vanity, as if I were accustomed to preach myself. God forbid that a minister of Heaven should ever suppose he needed an excuse with you! for whoever ye may be, ye are all of you sinners like myself. It is before your God and mine, that I feel myself impelled at this moment to strike my breast.

"Until now, I have proclaimed the righteousness of the Most High in churches covered with thatch. I have preached the rigours of penance to the unfortunate who wanted bread. I have declared to the good inhabitants of the country the most awful truths of my religion. Unhappy man! what have I done? I have made sad the poor, the best friends of my God! I have conveyed terror and grief into those simple and honest souls, whom I ought to have pitied and consoled! It is here only where I behold the great, the rich, the oppressors of suffering humanity, or sinners daring and hardened. Ah! it is here only where the sacred word should be made to resound with all the force of its thunder; and where I should place with me in this pulpit, on the one side, death which threatens you, and on the other, my great God, who is about to judge you. I hold to-day your sentence in my hand. Tremble then in my presence, ye proud and disdainful men who hear me! The necessity of salvation, the certainty of death, the uncertainty of that hour, so terrifying to you, final impenitence, the last judgment, the number of the elect, hell, and above all, eternity! eternity! These are the subjects upon which I am come to discourse, and which I ought, doubtless, to have reserved for you alone. Ah! what need have I of your commendation, which perhaps might damn me, without saving you? God is about to rouse you, while his unworthy minister speaks to you! for I have had a long experience of his mercies. Penetrated with a detestation of your past iniquities, and shedding tears of sorrow and repentance, you will then throw yourselves into my arms; and, by this remorse, you will prove that I am sufficiently eloquent."

Who doth not by this time perceive how much this eloquence excels the frigid and miserable pretensions of modern wit? In apologizing, so to speak, for having preached upon hell in the villages, Bridaine boldly assumed all the authority over his auditory which belonged to his

office, and prepared their hearts for the awful truths which he intended to announce. This exordium alone gave him a right to say every thing. Many persons still remember his sermon on eternity, and the terror which he diffused throughout the congregation, while blending, as was usual with him, quaint comparisons with sublime transports, he exclaimed, "What foundation, my brethren, have you for supposing your dying day at such a distance? Is it your youth? 'Yes,' you answer, 'I am, as yet, but twenty, but thirty.' Sirs, it is not you who are twenty or thirty years old, it is death which has advanced twenty or thirty years toward you. Observe: Eternity approaches. Do you know what this eternity is? It is a pendulum whose vibration says continually, Always—Ever—Ever—Always—Always! In the mean while, a reprobate cries out, 'What o'clock is it?' And the same voice answers, 'Eternity.'"

The thundering voice of Bridaine added, on those occasions, a new energy to his eloquence; and the auditory, familiarized to his language and ideas, appeared at such times in dismay before him. The profound silence which reigned in the congregation, especially when he preached until the approach of night, was interrupted from time to time, and in a manner very perceptible, by the long and mournful sighs, which proceeded, all at once, from every corner of the church where he was speaking.

Orators! ye who are wholly engrossed about your own reputation, fall at the feet of this apostolic man, and learn from a missionary wherein true eloquence consists. The people! the people! they are the principal, and perhaps, the best judges of your talents.*

* "Whoever, upon comparison, is deemed, by a common audience, the greatest orator, ought most certainly to be pronounced such by men of science and erudition. And, though an indifferent orator may triumph for a long time, and be esteemed altogether perfect by the vulgar, who are satisfied with his accomplishment, and know not

SECTION XIX.

ON THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS.

The success of this sort of popular eloquence is infallible, when there is united a voice sufficiently strong to maintain its vehemence, and a taste sufficiently delicate to avoid its eccentricities.

Hence we draw this conclusion, that it is a great error to discard, from the Gospel ministry, those awful subjects which enkindle the imagination of the preacher, while they tend to arouse every conscience. Beside, that religion is founded upon those awful truths, which its ministers ought not to conceal, and which men are afraid to hear, in proportion to their tendency to produce a conversion, I know no subjects which give a more ample scope to the art of oratory.

The Christian orator, who is above enriching his compositions with them, renounces his greatest advantages.

But, while we present these objects of terror, we cannot be too strongly convinced that it would be better to leave sinners in supineness than to drive them to despair; that this is not so much to reach the end as to exceed all bounds; that the Gospel is a law of love, and not a code of wrath; that men are naturally so weak that their faults ought to excite more compassion than anger; that a preacher is not the minister of the vengeance of Heaven, but the dispenser of its mercies; that instead of repelling sinners, it is proper to affect, to win, to reclaim them through fear to love; and to attemper the rigour of the law with the attraction of the rewards of the Gospel. Yes; it would be doubtless too severe, only to announce threatenings to men, who need continually to be encouraged and consoled.

in what he is defective; yet, whenever the true genius arises, he draws to him the attention of every one, and immediately appears superior to his rival." (*Hume's Essays*, Ess. xii.)

Make choice of affecting subjects, which lay hold of, and interest, the man and the Christian. Be scrupulous about choosing those confined subjects which circumscribe the orator within too narrow bounds, which are connected with no moral precept, or which make a part of all discourses on morality. Avoid frivolous subjects, whose surface appears showy, but which, when we attempt to search into them, only present us with particulars too insignificant and slender for eloquence; such as treat of matters of decorum rather than of duty; such as suggest materials for a letter rather than grounds for a sermon. Avoid quaint subjects which are improper for the multitude, merely serving the orator himself for a pompous declamation, in which the human heart can take no interest;—philosophical and abstract subjects, equally remote from religion and eloquence, and more adapted to the portico, or the lyceum, than to the Gospel pulpit;—those subjects, in a word, which, though they may have the appearance of being novel and animating, are really far-fetched and affected, and in which a discovery is made, not so much of genius, as of the want of it.

Many good subjects still remain for Christian orators to invent or revive. But there is no need to search for them, when they do not happen to present themselves naturally to the mind, as by an involuntary inspiration.

Begin with studying the prevailing bent of your genius; and, after having tried your strength on different subjects of argument, imagination, or sentiment, constantly follow that sort which is most peculiarly your own, and which nature itself hath destined for you.

Be not afraid of going in beaten tracks. A fertile orator always discovers new treasures in old mines. Wherefore should we hesitate to enter afresh upon those subjects which have been already successfully handled? Is it because our great masters have laid hold of all their most striking beauties, and that in draining those fields, formerly so fruitful, they have changed them into barren deserts?

Let us here be candid. If we were unacquainted with those lucid plans, those original ideas, which we so justly admire in their writings, should we have conceived them of ourselves? The superiority of the models ought to enkindle our emulation, instead of damping our courage.

If Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon, were to return upon earth, think we that their genius would be so fettered by their former masterly performances, as to be incapable of fresh productions? or that these immortal orators would not, even at this day, have been equal to themselves?—Exert your talents and zeal! The subjects, which seem to be exhausted, will immediately receive new life: and the orator, who can even now acquire originality, after these primitive men, shall participate their renown through all ages.

SECTION XX.

OF PANEGYRICS.

Wherefore should we suppose that we could succeed better in eloquence by making choice of subjects less known, when we so seldom observe distinguished success in the species of panegyric, although the masters of the art have not hitherto travelled this road with that eclat which they have acquired in delivering doctrinal and moral discourses? The new subjects in this branch of eloquence, which remain for Christian orators to handle, do not infallibly suggest to their minds the most eloquent orations. This remark proves that not new subjects, but new ideas, are wanting, in order to excel in the art of oratory.

Nothing, however, is more adapted to inflame the imagination, than the praise bestowed by the sacred ministry on those Christian heroes, whose examples do credit to our religion, while they condemn our behaviour.

If it be an excellent and pleasing sight to behold persons

assembled in a church, in order to their being instructed in all the duties of religion, it is also, without doubt, a very noble institution to have altars erected to virtue, and public eulogiums decreed to the most reverend saints, whom religion holds up to the imitation of her children. But men, whose lives, although in other respects unblemished, have been, notwithstanding, not much known, do not furnish sufficient materials for eloquence.

To acquire and maintain the honour of such solemn homage, it is necessary to possess celebrity proceeding from superior genius, or brilliant actions; to have obtained a distinguished influence over the age, or, at least, over the country, in which one has lived; to have formed an epoch in the history of religion; to be exalted above the common virtues; to have outlived one's self by illustrious monuments; and to appear before posterity with a reputation commanding respect: for, in spite of all the pomp of declaimers, a saint unknown will only obtain eulogiums unnoticed like himself.

The most common fault attending this species of discourse, is, a failure in giving a just description of the character of the man who is praised.

Panegyrists more or less dwell upon the surface, instead of penetrating to the bottom, of the subject.

Most panegyrics, distinguished from one another merely by the title, are equally applicable to all saints in similar circumstances, and consequently do not characterize any one.

It is on this account that we have not, as yet, any collection of the kind, which could be quoted for a model.

The panegyrics of Flechier, so long extolled as masterpieces in the rhetoric of colleges, are, in the present day, extremely fallen from their ancient glory.

Those of Massillon are universally considered as the least valuable of his productions. We are continually losing sight of the saint, whom the orator is praising, to

pursue long digressions of morality, generally foreign to the subject, and of which not one passage is remembered.

The inattention of preachers has occasioned the disgust of the public. This species of composition is now pretty generally abandoned, excepting a very small number of privileged subjects, which should never be given up. Panegyrics are very rarely pronounced in the pulpits of Paris.

It is when composing these sacred eulogies that we ought especially to keep in view this distinguished maxim of Boileau, "Nothing is beautiful but truth."

It is allowable to embellish facts by comparisons, or by contrasts, provided that we confine ourselves to those innocent artifices of eloquence; but it is ridiculous to pretend a false admiration, which every one sees through, and in which no one participates.

Indeterminate commendations, common places, accumulated epithets, deceitful adulations, disgustful exaggerations, discover ignorance or knavery, and at once destroy the confidence of the auditory.

Let the orator, then, always reflect that he is placed in the pulpit of truth; that he is surrounded with a number of intelligent hearers; that that which ceases to be probable is revolting; that the public opinion is never imposed on with impunity; and that extravagant compliments debase him who bestows them, without ever exalting him who receives them. Lysippus said justly, that he had honoured Alexander more by representing him with a pike in his hand, than Appelles, who always painted him hurling the thunderbolt like Jupiter.

When the subject of a panegyric is fertile in events, the moral ought to arise out of the historical narrative, without smothering it under a heap of reflections which occur to every auditor. A method too didactic would be injurious to the discourse, by impeding its rapidity.

Thoroughly comprehend the character and actions of

the man whom you celebrate. Surround him with his contemporaries. Describe the manners of the age in which he lived. Collect, combine, all the particulars which tend to the same point, that with them you may frame your materials. Arrange, so to speak, the virtues, the talents, the events, the misfortunes, which history presents to your view, and you will then impart to your narrations all the strength of argument, and all the glow of eloquence.

We cannot but reprobate the method of those inanimate panegyrists, who confound rhetorical distribution with chronological order.

That severe sentence alights on such, which the critic Boileau passed on poets, who are destitute of poetical rapture, and who write without enthusiasm. He styles them "sorry historians, that will follow the order of time without daring for one moment to lose sight of a subject."*

But it is no less certain, that, in the plan of a panegyric, we must attend to the plain relation of facts, so that the discourse, composed in other respects according to the rules of art, may appear the simple developement of the subject.

It is with some astonishment, that, after having read in Massillon all the circumstances of the death of a martyr or saint, we find the orator afterward promising the second part of the same panegyric.

This confusion of the plan destroys the effect of the subject; and the hearer, continually bewildered through the want of historical order, departs without obtaining the knowledge of him, whose praises he came to hear so emphatically delivered. What, but a panegyric, is this, which does not describe the man to whom it is consecra-

* Maigres Historiens suivront l'ordre des temps ;
Ils n'osent un moment perdre un sujet de vue.
Pour prendre Gand, il faut que Lille soit rendue,
Et que leur vers exact, ainsi que Mèzerai,
Ait deja fait tomber les remparts de Cou trai.

ted, and whose history I am still obliged to consult, if I wish to form clear ideas of his life?*

* Memoirs and panegyrics of eminent characters, when well selected and applied, are instructive and important branches of composition and reading.

In the list of biography, among a great variety which might be mentioned, the editor may venture to say, that perhaps there is no work of the sort better composed, nor of greater utility to the young student and divine, than Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Doddridge, by the late. Rev Job Orton; in which this excellent man pre-eminently shines forth a pattern for imitation, as a scholar, a gentleman, and a divine.

Of detached eulogiums on particular characters, none, perhaps, are more forcibly expressed, or more justly applied than Mr. Burke's, on that singularly benevolent character, Mr. Howard, the fame of whose disinterested actions hath raised him in Europe, what Horace styles *monumentum are perennius.*

Says Mr. Burke: "I cannot name this gentleman without remarking, that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe—not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art; not to collect medals, or collate manuscripts; but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, and to take the gage and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten; to attend to the neglected; to visit the forsaken; and to compare and collate the distresses of all men, in all countries.

"His plan is original; and is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt more or less in every country; I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail, but in gross, the reward of those who visit the prisoner; and he has so forestalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter." (*Burke's Speech to the Electors of Bristol*, 1780.)

The well known writer of the above elegant encomium has also given the public a later specimen of his talent for panegyric, in that highly coloured painting of the "beauteous queen of France," in his work entitled, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 112.

However divided the public are respecting the political sentiments

SECTION XXI.

OF S. VINCENT DE PAUL.

Of all the subjects of panegyric, which the modern history of religion affords us, the best, in my opinion, is the eulogy of S. Vincent de Paul; a man of great virtue, though possessed of but little renown; the best citizen whom France hath had; the apostle of humanity, who, after having been a shepherd in his childhood, hath left in his country establishments of more utility to the unfortunate, than the finest monuments of his sovereign, Louis XIV.

He was, successively, a slave at Tunis, preceptor of the Cardinal de Retz, minister of a village, chaplain-general of the galleys, principal of a college, chief of the missions, and joint-commissioner of ecclesiastical benefices.* He instituted, in France, the seminaries of the Lazarists. and of the daughters of charity, who devote themselves to the consolation of the unfortunate, and who scarcely ever change their condition, although their vows only bind them for a year. He endowed hospitals for foundlings, for orphans, for the insane, for galley slaves, and for old men. His generous compassion reached all kinds of wretchedness, with which the human species is oppressed, and monuments of his beneficence are to be found throughout all the provinces of the kingdom. When reading his life, we remark, that nothing does more honour to religion, than the history of institutions formed in favour of humanity, when humanity is beholden for them to the

contained in this celebrated work, it seems to be a prevailing and just opinion, that, in this description, Mr. Burke has suffered his imagination and galantry to gain the ascendancy over his sober judgment; and that, while painting the hardships of an individual, he has discovered the very spirit of a knight-errant, and carried his readers back to the almost forgotten age of chivalry.

* Adjoint au ministère de la feuille des Bénéfices.

ministers of the altars. While kings, armed against each other, ravage the earth, already laid waste by other scourges, Vincent de Paul, the son of a husbandman of Gascony, repaired the public calamities, and distributed more than twenty millions of livres in Champagne, in Picardy, in Lorraine, in Artois, where the inhabitants of whole villages were dying through want, and were afterward left in the fields without burial, until he undertook to defray the expenses of interment. He discharged, for some time, an office of zeal and charity toward the galleys. He saw, one day, a wretched galley slave, who had been condemned to three years' confinement for smuggling, and who appeared inconsolable on account of his wife and children having been left in the greatest distress. Vincent de Paul, sensibly affected with his situation, offered to put himself in his stead, and, what doubtless will scarcely be credited, the exchange was accepted. This virtuous man was chained among the crew of galley slaves, and his feet continued to be swollen during the remainder of his life, from the weight of those honourable irons which he had borne.

It is evident how much an action like this is capable of suggesting to the mind of an orator; and that he would be unworthy of his profession, if he related it without exciting tears.

When this great man came to Paris, foundlings were sold in the streets of St. Landry for twenty sous a piece; and the charge of these innocent creatures was committed, out of charity, as was reported, to diseased women, from whom they sucked corrupted milk.

These infants, whom government abandoned to public compassion, almost all perished; and such as happened to escape so many dangers were introduced clandestinely into opulent families, in order to dispossess the legitimate heirs. This, for more than a century, was a never-failing source of litigation, the particulars of which are to be

found in the compilation of our old lawyers. Vincent de Paul at once provided funds for the maintenance of twelve of these children. His charity was soon extended to the relief of all those who were left exposed at the doors of the churches. But that unusual zeal, which always gives life to a new institution, having cooled, the resources entirely failed, and fresh outrages were renewed on humanity.

Vincent de Paul was not discouraged. He convoked an extraordinary assembly. He caused a number of those wretched infants to be placed in the church; and forthwith mounting the pulpit, he pronounced, with his eyes bathed in tears, that discourse, which doth as much honour to his piety as his eloquence, and which I faithfully transcribe from the history of his life, drawn up by M. Abelly, bishop of Rhodes.

"Compassion and charity have assuredly induced you, ladies, to adopt these little creatures for your children.—You have been their mothers by kindness, since their mothers by nature have forsaken them. See, now, whether ye also are willing to abandon them. Cease, for the present, to be their mothers, that ye may become their judges. Their life and their death are in your hands. I am going to put it to the vote, and to take the suffrages. It is time to pronounce their sentence, and to know if ye are unwilling to have compassion any longer upon them. They will live, if ye continue to take a charitable care of them, and they will all die if ye abandon them."

Sighs were the only answer to this pathetic exhortation: and the same day, in the same church, at the very same time, the foundling hospital at Paris was founded and endowed with a revenue of forty thousand livres.*

* The success attending this discourse of Vincent de Paul, in the erection of the foundling hospital at Paris, is elsewhere (section 48) compared to that of the bishop of Worcester's sermon, which influenced the public benevolence to found a hospital for inoculation in London; and hence our author is led to remark, that "eloquence could not

This is the man, who scarcely possesses any fame in Europe! This is the man, who, according to the judgment of his enemies, had zeal only without talents! His life was interwoven with good works, the benefit of which we still enjoy.

The misfortune of S. Vincent de Paul (if it be one to be little praised, and even little known,) was not to be celebrated, when he died in 1661, by that eloquent Bossuet who immortalized all his heroes, and who, at the very time, was composing funeral orations for subjects far less deserving of his genius. But the honour of a public panegyric is due to his virtues; and the orator, who shall represent him in a point of view worthy of the admiration and gratitude of his fellow citizens, will have deserved well of his country.*

obtain a more excellent triumph." In addition to those two instances of successful discourse, it may be added, that, in consequence of Bishop Ridley's sermon on alms, King Edward VI. founded St. Bartholomew's hospital for the sick and wounded, bridewell for the wilfully idle and mad, and Christ Church for orphans. (*Burnet's Hist. of the Reformation.*)

* This singular character is styled the "Founder and first Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission." (*Bayle's Dict.* vol. i, p. 36.)

The account given by our author of this great and good man, brings to recollection the benevolent and patriotic exertions of the late excellent and well known Jonas Hanway, in behalf of chimney sweepers' apprentices, and on other occasions. "It was his maxim that one vigorous and well-concerted remonstrance of a real evil must be more effectual than a thousand vague complaints." He himself made a vigorous and well-concerted remonstrance in behalf of infant parish poor in London and Westminster, entered into the melancholy detail of mismanagement and neglect, published authentic lists of their mortality, which was almost universal, encountered the resentment of parish officers of all ranks by publishing their names, informed himself of the best methods in practice, both at home and abroad, for preserving poor infants. After persevering for years in investigating the evil and the remedy, he, at length, in 1766, by his own exertions, and at his sole expense, obtained an act of parlia-

SECTION XXII.

OF DESCRIBING CHARACTERS.

It is common in panegyrics, or in funeral orations, for orators to sketch the portraiture of contemporaries who have been the rivals or antagonists of the man whose virtues are praised. Such passages are commonly criticised with so much the more severity, as they always indicate design; and the auditor is uninterested in hearing them, unless a distinguished precision immediately impress them on his memory; unless each stroke of the pencil form an excellent trait; unless the man, of whose character we are forming a judgment, is already celebrated; and in a word, unless the orator compress many ideas into a very narrow compass.

When Massillon preached to the nuns of Chilot, in the presence of the queen of England, he drew the picture of the prince of Orange, to please the consort of King James; but his genius rendered him no service on this occasion. Massillon only introduces one thought, in order to describe William III. which he expresses with sufficient precision, and afterward dilates with his usual elegance, but without thoroughly investigating the character of the stadtholder, or availing himself of the result of the history.

His amplification was more adapted to console the queen of England, than to describe the prince of Orange.

ment, which, from its beneficial influence, was called by poor people, *the act for keeping children alive.*

"The life of Jonas Hanway is a series of benevolent intentions, recommended by his writings, promoted by his bounty, and accomplished by unceasing industry. All his efforts, except his opposition to the bill for naturalizing the Jews, were dictated by a wise, liberal, and enlarged benevolence. We calculate, with pleasing admiration, how much it is possible for a good man zealously affected to accomplish." "In every good work that he began, he did it with all his might, and prospered." (*Charter's Sermon on Alms*, p. 40, and *Hanway's Life, by Pugh.*)

It may serve for an illustration of the fact, that Massillon enlarged too much on the same idea, and extremely misapplied his fluency of expression.

Would you wish to know how Bossuet has described the protector Cromwell? Contrast with the excessive copiousness of the bishop of Clermont, the energetic impetuosity of the bishop of Meaux. Nothing will more strongly mark the difference of their genius.

"A man, in whom was combined an incredible depth of mind, the refined hypocrite, and the skilful politician; a man capable of any undertaking, and of profound dissimulation; equally active and indefatigable in peace and war; who left nothing to fortune, that he could take from her, either by resolution or foresight; withal so vigilant, and prepared on every side, that he never neglected the opportunities with which she presented him. In a word, he was one of those restless and daring geniuses, who seem as if they were born to effect the revolution of the world." (*Funeral oration for the queen of England.*)

It is thus that a few lines suffice to develope an extraordinary character, with the penetration of a moralist, the vehemence of an orator, and the correctness of a historian.

Massillon slightly glances upon subjects, and has a profusion of words. Bossuet acts precisely the reverse. It is not possible to deliver an opinion more adapted to establish the decision of posterity.

SECTION XXIII.

OF COMPLIMENTS.

Since the discussion of the different rules, to which the art of eloquence subjects Christian orators, hath led me on to various episodical details, I must not proceed to more important matters, without dwelling a little longer on

another branch of ministerial work, which has much affinity to panegyrics, and especially to the description of characters.

I mean to speak of *compliments*, with which we are sometimes led to begin, or finish, our pulpit discourses.

Established usage no longer permits the ministers of the Gospel to preach the sacred word before the rulers of the world without burning at their feet some grains of incense. Kings are, therefore, much to be pitied, who are pursued with flattery in those very churches where they come to learn their duty, and to be humbled for their faults: but it is, also, to be regretted, that Christian orators, who ought then to speak to the conscience of the guilty, should degrade themselves to a level with a crowd of flatterers. What must doubtless comfort them, is, the assurance that commendations enjoined upon the man who offers them, cannot dazzle the great, to whom they are addressed.

Let no one, however, exceed the bounds of just praise; for religion doth not permit any farther than is consistent with truth.

Let us ever recognize an apostle as an enemy to falsehood, even in those compliments wherein one might so often suppose himself freed from the obligations of sincerity. Let us not bring a ministry, divinely commissioned, into contempt, by exaggerated eulogiums which can never impose, either upon the great who despise them, upon the orator who pronounces them, upon the auditor who hears them, or upon God, who forms a just judgment concerning them.

Adulation always displeases. "To praise princes for virtues which they have not," says the Duke de Rochefoucauld, "is to insult them with impunity." (*Thought*, 320.) It is, at least, to forget the respect which is due them.

Eusebius, in "The Life of Constantine," (book iv,

chap. 4,) relates, that this emperor imposed silence upon a preacher, who was base enough to imitate, in his sermon, the fiction of Virgil respecting the Apotheosis of Augustus, telling Constantine, that, after his death, he should be associated with the Son of God in the government of the universe.

I admire, in Bossuet, that noble and manly freedom, which he always possessed, through fear of flattery. We discern, in his compliments, a certain apostolic severity, and a marked dislike of adulation.

Had an indifferent person been nominated to praise Madam de la Valliere for entering into a religious order, in the presence of Queen Maria Theresa, he would not have declined such an opportunity of extolling the virtues of the consort of Louis XIV.

"It is proper," said Bossuet to her, "it is fit, madam, that as you form by your rank so considerable a part of worldly grandeur, you should sometimes join in ceremonies wherein we learn to undervalue it." The orator then recalls his subject, and thinks no more of the princess.

Fenelon never weakened, in his preaching, the force of the sacred maxims which he hath recorded in Telemachus against flatterers.

One single compliment of this kind is alone extant. It is to be found toward the conclusion of the discourse which he delivered at the consecration of the elector of Cologne. That passage is alike worthy of Fenelon, by its distinguished moderation, as well as by the rhetorical expression which he makes use of to justify the reservedness of his eulogium.

"You have just heard, my brethren, all that I have said to this prince. What have I not dared to say to him? And what ought I not to be bold to say to him, since his only fear is not to know the truth? The greatest praise would do him infinitely less honour than the episcopal liberty with which he wishes me to address him."

It is difficult to adopt a direct address in compliments, without appearing either to exaggerate, or to have a uniformity of style, and also without embarrassing the person too much, whom we mean to praise.

It is preferable to include them in a paraphrase of the Holy Scriptures, or in prayer to God, or in an apostrophe addressed to the auditory.

But whatever be the mode of expression that we select, the compliment delivered must be connected with the subject under discussion; common places, which characterize no one, must be avoided; instruction must be blended with praise, or rather be made to proceed out of the praise itself; we must confine ourselves to a small number of lively and striking ideas; and endeavour to conclude with a passage happily expressed, and easily remembered.

Bourdaloue never excelled in this article. All his compliments are trivial. In the sermon he preached at Versailles, two days after the marriage of the duke of Bourbon, son of the great dauphin, with Adelaide of Savoy, he repeated, toward his conclusion, a passage of Scripture, the application of which forcibly struck the auditory. Some esteemed it a very happy allusion, while others were of opinion that it degenerated into a play of words.

After a very instructive eulogium, Bourdaloue speaks, in these terms, of the young princess :—

"There is that, which, in my estimation, renders her more respectable than her rank, and which induces me to say as Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, when beholding, for the first time, the spouse of the son of his master, cried out in a transport of admiration and praise, 'This truly is she whom God hath chosen to be the wife of the son of my lord!'"

SECTION XXIV.

OF A DIRECT ADDRESS; AND RHETORICAL DIALOGUE.

If drawing of characters and compliments be excepted, in which the orator may sometimes descend, without degradation, to the sparkling efforts of wit, a manly energy, of which solidity constitutes the beauty, should enliven all the members of his discourses.

Whenever he addresses an assembly he should affect them, for the language of the passions is that alone which strikes the multitude.

I have often remarked, that in the reading societies which are formed in the country, eloquent works are chosen in preference to those of instruction. Truth satisfies the mind of a solitary reader; but no sooner doth he unite with others, than he wishes to be affected; and writings otherwise excellent cease to please, when they undergo the formidable experiment of being read aloud.

Attempt not then to write a book when you are composing a sermon. Guard against ever adopting the languid trammels of a writer, who speaks from his pen, or his paper, while I should be attending to his discourse as the inspiration of the moment.

Are you desirous that your eloquence may be animated? Substitute for the languor of a continued discourse, the liveliness of an immediate address. Converse continually with your hearers. Instead of wandering in abstract contemplations, as if you were meditating in solitude, speak to that numerous assembly which gathers around to hear you.

You will find a very good example of this direct address in "the familiar instruction of Massillon, upon the ceremony of Absolution:" an admirable exhortation, which bears no resemblance to any of his other discourses, and in which each expression is a dart thrown by the orator, transfixing the hearts of his auditory!

To speak to the hearers is not sufficient. It is also requisite to make them speak themselves, and to add to the variegated charms of an immediate address, the never failing and increasing effect of dialogue.

The ancients discussed in dialogues, the most philosophic subjects. These men who knew so well how to imitate nature, did not compose inanimate books, when they meant to unfold the ideas they had collected in their meditations. They approached to the manner of the drama. They placed upon the stage some friends, whose conversations they reported. They thus discussed various opposite opinions, with an equal mixture of wisdom and urbanity. They made choice of each reader for a judge; and hence it is that they have diffused over the writings of antiquity all that delight which is experienced while attending to the conversation of a select number of intelligent guests, who mutually impart each other's thoughts, in the agreeable freedom of an entertainment.

If, by this mode of dialogue, Plato and Cicero have succeeded in enlivening metaphysical subjects, how much greater impulse and life would it not impart to eloquence?

In oratory, dialogue supplies the place of alternate speakers, breaks the monotony, gives strength to the argument, and inspires confidence, provided the orator does not weaken those difficulties which he ought to propose to himself; for, if the hearer can render the objection more forcible than the orator, he will no longer attend to his answers.

Beside, nothing is better calculated for reviving the attention than those suspensions, properly managed, which cause the hearers to fluctuate in a kind of uncertainty, proceeding at first from an emotion of surprise, when the orator starts objections to himself, which he afterward converts into curiosity, when he refutes them.

I am often delighted with those cogent questions in

the discourses of Massillon, which engage the attention of the hearers, at the very moment when they might be apt to withdraw it.

An example of this sort occurs in his sermon "on the mixture of the righteous and the wicked."

"The righteous deprive iniquity of every excuse. Do you say that you have done no more than to follow established precedents? But have the righteous, who are among you, conformed to them? Do you plead the unavoidable consequences of illustrious descent? You know some, who, with a name still more distinguished than your own, impart sanctity to splendour. Do you plead the vivacity of your years?—the weakness of your sex? Every day will show you some, who, in the bloom of youth, and with all the talents suited to this world, have their minds supremely bent on heaven. Is it the distraction of business? You may see those engaged in the same cares with yourself, who, notwithstanding, make salvation their principal concern. Is pleasure your delight? Pleasure is the first desire of all men, and of the righteous, in some of whom it is even stronger, and whose natural dispositions are less favourable to virtue, than in you. Do you plead your afflictions? There are some good men distressed. Or prosperity? There are those to be met with, who, amidst their abundance, devote themselves to God. Or the state of your health? You discover some, who, in sickly bodies, possess souls filled with Divine fortitude. Turn yourself which way you will; as many righteous, as many the witnesses which testify against you."*

* The discussion of a variety of important subjects in the form of dialogue has been frequently adopted. The ancient Greek and Roman writers abounded in this method of composition. Among others, Plato, Lucian, Cicero, Macrobius, the author of the *Dialogue concerning the Causes of the Corruption of Eloquence*, (ascribed by some to Tacitus, and by others to Quintilian;) Æschines, Socraticus,

SECTION XXV.

OF AN ARDENT STYLE.

In proportion to the frequency of dialogue in a discourse, the less will apostrophes be necessary; and the less lavish we are of this figure, the greater will be its effect.

Minutius, Felix, Xenophen,† give us specimens of entire discourses drawn in this manner. Volusenus has left an elegant Latin dialogue, *De ammi tranquillitate*, which is much in the spirit of the ancients, and possesses pure and chaste latinity.

Various instances of the same sort may be traced so early as in the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as in those of the evangelists. Such are these; Isa. xlix, 14, 15: "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Rom. vi, 1, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" In like manner, Rom. ix, 19, "Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" So 1 Cor. xv, 35–39, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, &c."

Modern, as well as ancient writers, have handled subjects in this form of dialogue, or immediate address.

Mr. Addison hath left behind him his *Dialogues upon the usefulness of ancient medals*, which he seems to have formed upon the plan of Cicero. We have also Berkeley's Alciphron; Baxter's Matho; Hurd's and Fordyce's Dialogues on Education; Fordyce on the Art of Preaching; Fenelon on Eloquence; Fontenelle's and Lyttleton's Dialogues of the Dead; More's Divine Dialogues; Harris, of Salisbury; and honest John Bunyan in his Pilgrim, &c.

Dr. Ward observes, that, "this method seems to be attended with

† Xenophen may, without much impropriety, be called a dialogue writer; for, though his writings are not in the direct form of dialogue, yet he continually makes his characters speak in their own language. Homer, also, abounds in this form of dialogue.

It is in apostrophes that the orator should display all his vehemence, if he would avoid the danger and confusion attending himself, alone, being warmed with his subject. Feeling succeeds better than reasoning in those moments of effervescence, in which the soul ought to burst forth with sufficient impetuosity to hurry the auditory along, one while by the strength of the proofs, another while by the energy of rhetorical strokes.

When apostrophes are multiplied, they discover a declaimer, who cannot write, who is confused rather than moved, and who substitutes affected convulsions for the transports of eloquence.

It is necessary, without doubt, that the orator should enliven his compositions with that ardour of soul which indicates and awakens sensibility.

If his writings be destitute of those glowing ideas which proceed from the heart, his most emphatic language will only be insipid jargon.

"The dull writer is a wretched author." This maxim of Boileau is incontestable.

But if by the term *ardour*, be understood the fermenta-

very considerable advantages, if well and judiciously managed. For it is capable to make the driest subjects entertaining and pleasant, by its variety, and the different characters of the speakers. Beside, matters, which seem to clear up a subject, may be introduced with a better grace by questions and answers, objections and replies, than can be conveniently done in continued discourse. There is likewise a farther advantage in this way of writing, that the author is at liberty to choose his speakers. And, therefore, as Cicero well observed, when we imagine that we hear persons of an established reputation for wisdom and knowledge talking together, it necessarily adds a weight and authority to the discourse, (*De Amic*, c. 1,) and more closely engages the attention. The subject matter of it is very extensive; for whatever is a proper argument of discourse, public or private, serious or jocose; whatever is fit for wise and ingenious men to talk upon, either for improvement or diversion, is suitable for a dialogue." (*Ward's System of Oratory*, vol. ii, p. 219.) See to the same effect in *Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 293.

tions of a roving brain, paradox united to a depraved taste, unceasing apostrophes, exclamations, obscure hyperboles; in a word, a style inflated with extravagant metaphors; ah! guard against such digressions, O young orator, who hast received from nature the inestimable gift of genius. Be assured that genuine enthusiasm is no other than reason warmed by the voice of the passions, and that eloquence is not a delirium.*

* "Ancient eloquence," says Mr. Hume, "i. e. the sublime and passionate, is of a much juster taste than the modern, or the argumentative and rational; and, if properly executed, will always have more command and authority over mankind. The ancients, upon comparison, gave the preference to that kind, of which they have left us such applauded models. Lysius, and others, were esteemed in their time; but, when compared with Demosthenes and Cicero, were eclipsed like a taper when set in the rays of a meridian sun. Those latter orators possessed the same elegance, and subtlety, and force of argument, with the former; but what rendered them chiefly admirable. was that pathetic and sublime, which, on proper occasions, they threw into their discourse; and by which they commanded the resolutions of their audience." (*Hume's Essays*, No. xii, p. 123.)

"The *vehement* style, (says Dr. Blair,) always implies strength; and is not, by any means, inconsistent with simplicity: but its predominant character is distinguishable from either the strong or the simple manner. It has a peculiar ardour; it is a glowing style; and the language of a man, whose imagination and passions are heated, and strongly affected by what he writes: who is therefore negligent of lesser graces, but pours himself forth with the rapidity and fulness of a torrent. It belongs to the higher kinds of oratory; and, indeed, is rather expected from a man who is speaking, than from one who is writing in his closet. The orations of Demosthenes furnish the full and perfect example of this species of style." (*Blair's Lectures*, Lect. xix, p. 396.)

Dr. Blair elsewhere says, "There is a still higher degree of eloquence, wherein a greater power is exerted over the human mind; by which we are not only convinced, but interested, agitated, and carried along with the speaker; our passions are made to rise together with his; we enter into all his emotions; we love, we detest, we resent, according as he inspires us; and are prompted to resolve, or to act, with vigour and warmth. Such high eloquence is always the offspring of passion. By passion, I mean that state of the mind in

Do you ask, What is frigid? It is whatever is exaggerated; whatever is destitute of judgment; whatever pretends to wit; whatever is written without interesting; and, especially, nothing is more frigid than a counterfeit ardour.

The genuine talent for eloquence is distinguished among very different styles. The orator possessed of it is always simple without ever appearing vulgar. He shuns whatever is tumid or loose, or affected, or obscure; and he knows, at times, how much to touch the soul, and to charm the ear. Master of his expressions, as he is of his thoughts, he rises, he is melted, he is inflamed, when his subjects require excellence, sensibility, or fervour. To avoid in his discourses the tone of declamation, he meditates a long time before he writes; for it is the effect of meditation to retrench the superfluity of words. The sacrifices, which he offers to taste, do not enervate his energy; they yield fresh pleasure to the auditor, who is capable of admiring a

which it is agitated and fired by some object it has in view. A man may convince, and even persuade others to act, by mere reason and argument. But that degree of eloquence which gains the admiration of mankind, and properly denominates one as an orator, is never found without warmth, or passion. Passion, when in such a degree as to rouse and kindle the mind, without throwing it out of the possession of itself, is universally found to exalt all the human powers. It renders the mind infinitely more enlightened, more penetrating, more vigorous and masterly, than it is in its calm moments. A man actuated by a strong passion becomes much greater than he is at other times. He is conscious of more strength and force; he utters greater sentiments, conceives higher designs, and executes them with a boldness and felicity, of which, on other occasions, he could not think himself capable. But chiefly, with respect to persuasion, is the power of passion felt. Almost every man, in passion, is eloquent. Then he is at no loss for words and arguments. He transmits to others, by a sort of contagious sympathy, the warm sentiments which he feels; his looks and gestures are all persuasive; and nature here shows herself infinitely more powerful than all art. This is the foundation of that just and noted rule: Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 7.)

natural and true expression of genius, in a judicious and correct phraseology.*

This excellence, so rare, and so deserving of universal approbation, loses, however, all its estimation in the eyes of those whom a counterfeit energy dazzles, and who deviate from the language of nature.

We know that Seneca found the eloquence of Cicero too simple, and that his disciple Nero gilded the statues of Lysippus. (*Plin.* 34 c. 8.)

SECTION XXVI.

OF EPITHETS.

Style loses its fulness and energy when words are environed with cumbrous epithets.

It hath been remarked, that, in the philosophical analysis of languages, the substantive is nothing, as it were, because *abstract*, and the adjective every thing, because it is *sensible*. But it is not so in eloquence, where, frequently, the epithet not being required by the accompanying word, oppresses the period, without strengthening the thought.†

* "First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same;
Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show, and without pomp presides."
Pope's Essay on Criticism, l. 69.

† "Feeble writers," says Dr. Blair, "employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood, as they think, more distinctly; and they only confound the reader. They are sensible of not having caught the precise expression, to convey what they would signify; they do not, indeed, conceive their own meaning very precisely themselves; and, therefore, help it out as they can, by this and the other word, which may, as they suppose, supply the defect, and bring you somewhat nearer to their idea: they are always going

Every useless epithet ought to be proscribed. The orator's elocution becomes loose and dragging, when each expression doth not conduce to throw light upon the meaning, or, at least, to charm with the harmony.*

Such is the case with some discourses, which seem to be destitute of ideas, although in other respects profoundly studied, inasmuch as one half of the words might safely have been retrenched.

SECTION XXVII.

OF THE NECESSITY OF AN ORATOR'S REFINING HIS STYLE.

Christian orators, do you, yourselves, erase such disgusting pleonasms. Pass a critical judgment upon your productions, and together with such insignificant expressions, banish all those negligencies of style, which degrade the sublimity of the ideas.

about it, and about it, but never just hit the thing. The image, as they set it before you, is always double; and no double image is distinct. When an author tells me of his *courage* in the day of battle, the expression is precise, and I understand it fully. But if from the desire of multiplying words, he will needs praise his *courage* and *fortitude;* at the moment he joins these words together, my idea begins to waver. He means to express one quality more strongly; but he is, in truth, expressing two. *Courage* resists danger; *fortitude* supports pain. The occasion of exerting each of these qualities is different; and being led to think of both together, when only one of them should be in my view, my view is rendered unsteady, and my conception of the object indistinct." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, p. 190, 191.)

* "Beware of imagining that we render style strong or expressive by a constant and multiplied use of epithets. This is a great error. Epithets have often great beauty and force. But if we introduce them into every sentence, and string many of them together to one object, in place of strengthening, we clog and enfeeble style, and render the image confused and indistinct which we mean to illustrate." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 117.)

It is not required that the whole of a sermon should be equally striking; but it is requisite that it be all equally well written, and that eloquence make amends, by the beauty of the expression, for the quality of the thoughts when they are ordinary; just as sculpture adds, by the richness of the drapery, to the elegance of the figures.

We must allow pauses for admiration. This is chiefly necessary for the sake of energy. If, therefore, it be remarked that there are many very eloquent passages in a sermon composed with care, and containing forcible arguments, the praise will be sufficient, since there is none as yet extant, which is in all respects perfect.

Is the merit of a pure and elegant style your ambition? Multiply the copies of your discourses, and cease not to transcribe your performance until you are able to afford satisfaction to yourself.

An orator ought to adopt the motto of Cesar, who "thought that he had done nothing, while there remained any thing for him to do." The more he writes, the better he writes; and it is only by surmounting the tediousness of reiterated transcriptions, that he can display in his style all the elegance of his taste.

Hence it is, that very few men of learning employ all their powers to advantage. The greater part, being accustomed to rest too soon contented, die without ever having known the extent of their own talents.

Fresh ideas, the beauties of enlargement, the exquisite sentiment of a finished passage, which Horace so well defined and relished when he called it *qui me mihi reddat amicum;* in a word, the elegant and variegated turns of expression, which compose the beauty of style, do not occur to a writer in the first cast of a work, and are generally the effect of a slow correction.

While there remains room to alter, there is opportunity for improvement. It is the characteristic of excellence in all the arts, so sensibly to strike the spectator who admires

it, that he can conceive of nothing transcending that which he beholds.

However little we may have accustomed ourselves to write, we easily distinguish those passages which have not been sufficiently studied, and which proceeded from the pen of the writer before they had been thoroughly digested in his own mind. This hasty or negligent composition soon discovers itself, not, as is commonly supposed, by the pleasing freedom of a diction somewhat too unrestrained and irregular, but by the confusion of expression, all the constituent parts of which are stiff and forced.

The more the writer hurries himself, the more dragging, of course, is his style. And when it is said that a writing "smells of the lamp," it is an evident proof that it is not sufficiently laboured.

When the steel hath been well polished, the edge of the file is no more perceived.

SECTION XXVIII.

OF A PROPER SELECTION OF WORDS.

Let no one accuse me here of exhorting orators to render their compositions insipid, with a view of improving their style.

I am sensible, that, whatever we wish to finish with too much care, we enervate; and, that the impetuosity of eloquence spurns at those minute researches which would extinguish its fervour; but I am aware also, that we can write from present impulse, and correct afterward, at leisure, without cooling the original ardour; and that a proper medium is requisite to be kept between the extreme of neglecting application, which adds to the defects of taste, and the excess of labour, which deadens the transports of genius.

Boileau hath said before me, and better than I have, "Put your work twenty times upon the frame; polish and re-polish it continually; sometimes add and often erase."*

A pains-taking orator, who is desirous of giving the

* Vingt fois sur les mè tier remettez votre ouvrage;
Pollissez le sans cesse, et le repollissez.
Adjoutez quelquefois, et souvent effacèz.

Horace, who was a shrewd judge of human nature, insists upon an author's being rigorously strict in criticising and correcting his own works.

Vir bonus et prudens versus reprehendet inertes;
Culpabit duros; incomtis allinet atrum
Transverso calamo signum; ambitiosa recidet
Ornamenta; parum claris lucem dare coget.
Arguet ambigue dictum mutanda notabit.

Hor. de Art Poet. v, 445.

Dr. Blair enforces the same attention to the work of revision and correction, in his directions for forming style, when he observes, that "there may be an extreme in too great and anxious a care about words. We must not retard the course of thought, nor cool the heat of imagination, by pausing too long on every word we employ. There is, on certain occasions, a glow of composition which should be kept up, if we hope to express ourselves happily, though at the expense of allowing some inadvertencies to pass. A more severe examination of these must be left to be the work of correction. For, if the practice of composition be useful, the laborious work of correcting is no less so; it is, indeed, absolutely necessary to our reaping any benefit from the habit of composition. What we have written, should be laid by for some little time, till the ardour of composition be past, till the fondness for the expressions we have used be worn off, and the expressions themselves be forgotten; and then reviewing our work with a cool and critical eye, as if it were the performance of another, we shall discern many imperfections which at first escaped us. Then is the season for pruning redundancies; for weighing the arrangement of sentences; for attending to the juncture and connecting particles; and bringing style into a regular, correct, and supported form. This *limæ labour* must be submitted to by all who would communicate their thoughts with proper advantage to others; and some practice in it will soon sharpen their eye to the most necessary objects of attention, and render it a much more easy and practicable work than might at first be imagined." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, p. 404.)

finishing stroke to his productions, is always repaid for his trouble. If correction do not suggest to him the materials of a discourse, it at least points out expressions unworthy of the pulpit, which sometimes escape in the ardour of composition; and this, doubtless, is a valuable advantage in a style wherein we apprehend, justly enough, that one bad word doth oftentimes more injury than a weak argument.

Correction suggests to the orator appropriate expressions which render his ideas more striking, and his sentiments more impassioned. "In the same manner," says Cicero, "as clothes, at first invented through necessity, have afterward become ornamental to the human body, so words, created by necessity, impart also beauty to discourse."

The value of well placed expressions is so striking in the art of oratory, that the eloquence of a passage sometimes depends upon a single word. Take an example which is deserving of admiration. I select it from an excellent discourse which the Cardinal de Rohan, grand almoner of France, pronounced upon presenting the body of Louis XIV. at the abbey of St. Dennis:—"The prince, whose loss we mourn, leaves, it is true, *names* celebrated upon earth; and posterity the most remote, will, like us, admire Louis the great, the just, the conqueror, the pacific, the friend of learning, and the protector of kings."

Had the Cardinal de Rohan said, that this monarch left upon earth a celebrated *name*, his expression would have been very common; but the same phrase put in the plural, while speaking only of one man, and the enumeration of the several titles of glory of Louis XIV., which at once justifies this bold ascription, appear to me a sublime stroke.

Massillon knew also this secret of the art. In his writings, a word, which seemed to declare a paradox, often expressed a new thought, and a very weighty and

just idea. Such is that admirable apostrophe, which we read in his sermon, "on the mixture of the righteous and the wicked." "Ye great ones of the earth! the innocent pleasure of sincerity, without which there is nothing agreeable in the commerce of mankind, is denied you, and ye have no more friends, because it is too *beneficial* to be one."

SECTION XXIX.

OF METAPHORS.

"I AM fond," says Montaigne, "of words corresponding with the thought." But, to represent an idea in all its energy, the vulgar expression is frequently insufficient, and then the metaphor becomes the proper word in rhetorical language.

It is essential to the two objects of which a metaphor is composed, that their relation to each other be obvious, and that they may be marked by no striking dissimilitude.

Eloquence could not exist without this language of imagination. "Speech," says Cicero, "ought equally to strike the mind and senses of all men."* Now, the senses are not moved but by the liveliness of images. Nature herself, which is the original model of art, suggests the most expressive images to savages, to infants, and to the meanest ranks of people, when they are governed by a strong passion.

Dumarsais hath judiciously observed, that "more tropes were made use of in the markets, than in the academies." It is true, those popular metaphors are often very inaccurate, and a writer ought to express them with exactness, when he means to admit them into elevated language.

That absurd medley of Balthasar Gratian has been quoted with propriety, as a very striking example of the abuse which may be made of figurative eloquence: "Thoughts

* Oratio hominum sensibus et mentibus accommodata. *De Orat.* 12, 55.

flow from the extensive coasts of memory, embark on the sea of the imagination, arrive at the port of genius, to be registered at the custom house of the understanding."*

There must, doubtless, be imagination in the manner of expression; but, above all, there must be truth and judgment.

The image is false, when there is a contradiction of terms: as in that phrase, "I shall ascend to the founda-

* Perhaps it may be no unsuitable parallel to the fantastical metaphor of Balthasar Gratian, mentioned by M. Maury, to quote from the Life of Gilpin, that absurd bombast, said to have been addressed by a high sheriff at Oxford to the students: "Arriving," says he, "at the mount of St. Mary, in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits carefully conserved for the chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation." (*Gibbon's Rhetoric*, p. 17.)

The Spectator humorously describes the abuse of figurative eloquence, when he says, "An unskilful author shall run metaphors so absurdly into one another, that there shall be no simile, no agreeable picture, no apt resemblance, but confusion, obscurity, and noise. Thus have I known a hero compared to a thunderbolt, a lion, and the sea; all and each of them proper metaphors for impetuosity, courage, or force; but by bad management it hath so happened, that the thunderbolt hath overflowed its banks, the lion hath darted through the skies, and the billows have rolled out of the Lybian desert."

The same author presents us with the following letter, as a specimen of the enormous abuse of metaphorical expression:—"Sir, after the many heavy lashes that have fallen from your pen, you may justly expect, in return, all the load that my ink can lay upon your shoulders. You have quartered all the foul language upon me that could be raked out of the air of Billingsgate, without knowing who I am, or whether I deserve to be cupped and scarified at this rate. I tell you, once for all, turn your eyes where you please, you shall never smell me out. Do you think that the panics which you sow about the parish will ever build a monument to your glory? No, sir, you may fight these battles as long as you will, but when you come to balance the account, you will find that you have been fishing in troubled waters, and that an ignis fatuus hath bewildered you, and that indeed you have built upon a sandy foundation, and brought your hogs to a fair market." (*Spectator*, No. 595.)

tion of the Cartesian system." It is incoherent, when it describes, on one side, a physical substance, and, on the other, a moral subject: such is that parenthesis, "I say then (and I always continue fixed upon my principles.") It is puerile and far-fetched, whenever it forms an affected and unusual periphrasis: as when sun dials have been called "the registers of the sun." But it becomes descriptive and just, when it is expressed with simplicity and energy. It is thus that Bossuet describes the demands of luxury, when he says, that "every art is exhausted (literally sweats) to satisfy them."*

When Bossuet makes use of a metaphor which seems bold, he sometimes apologizes; and presently he rises upon that description, which he does not find sufficiently great nor daring.

"Shall I speak to you," says he in the funeral oration for Maria Theresa, "shall I speak to you concerning the death of her children? Let us figure to ourselves that young prince, whom the graces themselves appear to have formed with their hands. Forgive me this expression: methinks I still behold this flower falling. At that time the sorrowful messenger of an event so fatal, I was also the witness, when beholding the king and queen, of the most piercing grief on the one hand, and, on the other, of the most mournful lamentations; and under different forms I saw an unbounded affliction."

* To avoid such improprieties as those mentioned by our author, it is of importance to bear in mind what Dr. Blair says on this subject:—"A good rule has been given for examining the propriety of metaphors, when we doubt whether or not they be of the mixed kind; namely, that we should try to form a picture upon them, and consider how the parts would agree, and what sort of figure the whole would present, when delineated with a pencil. By these means we should become sensible whether inconsistent circumstances were mixed, and a monstrous image thereby produced; or whether the object was, all along, presented in one natural and consistent point of view." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, p. 311.)

An idea which would be common, were it not for the boldness of the imagination which sometimes gives sensation to inanimate beings, becomes interesting under the pencil of an orator or a poet.

Eloquence, I know, hath less extensive privileges than poetry. The latter is exempted, according to the judicious observation of Boileau, from all the set forms of excuse to which prose is subjected: e. g. "Pardon this expression—so to speak—if I may venture to say so," &c. We often find, however, in excellent orators, metaphors which we should be scrupulous about hazarding in verse. Those figures are so transfused through the style, that they are scarcely observed in the perusal.

Racine was, doubtless, struck with that expression in the sermon "on the mixture of the righteous and the wicked," where Massillon says, "the righteous man can with boldness condemn in others, that which he disallows in himself; *his instructions do not put his conduct to the blush;*" as he had expressed his admiration of that other metaphor, which is in the same discourse; "*the courtiers of Zedekiah charged the tears and dismal predictions of Jeremiah*, occasioned by the ruin of Jerusalem, *with a secret desire of pleasing the king of Babylon*, who was besieging that unfortunate city."

SECTION XXX.

OF TECHNICAL EXPRESSIONS.

Let us never confound with this elegant language of the imagination those technical words which could only appertain to the vocabulary of sciences.

Pity on an orator, when it is necessary to be learned in order to understand him!

It is not to excite astonishment by the display of his learning that he speaks to an assembled multitude; it is to move, it is to affect them: and he mistakes his object

if he prefer those abstract and intellectual expressions, which the vulgar do not comprehend, to those tender and ardent ones, which produce a general impression.

A Christian orator is under still stronger obligation to address his hearers with that simplicity of style, without which he will never be truly eloquent. All men are bound to practise the duties of religion; it is therefore requisite that all may be able to understand the minister who announces them. But let us once more repeat it, the discharge of zeal in this, as in every other part of a sermon, is inseparable from the rules of art.

Is it your desire to be eloquent? Be simple. I go farther: be familiar in your discourses.*

* "Youth," says M. Rollin, "cannot be made too sensible of the character of simplicity which runs through the writings of the ancients. They should be accustomed to study nature in all things, and be assured that the best eloquence is that which is the most natural and least far-fetched. The Grecians gave it a very significant name, *αφελεια*, which is pretty near what Horace calls *simplex munditiis*, an elegant simplicity." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, p. 59.)

"A writer of simplicity," says Dr. Blair, "expresses himself in such a manner that every one thinks he could have written in the same way: Horace describes it:—

Ut sibi quivis
Speret idem, sudet multum, frustraque laboret
Ausus idem.

"There are no marks of art in his expression; it seems the very language of nature; you see in the style not the writer and his labour, but the man, in his own natural character. He may be rich in his expression; he may be full of figures, and of fancy; but these flow from him without effort; and he appears to write in this manner, not because he has studied it, but because it is the manner of expression most natural to him. This is the great advantage of simplicity of style, that, like simplicity of manners, it shows us a man's sentiments and turn of mind laid open without disguise. More studied and artificial manners of writing, however beautiful, have always this disadvantage, that they exhibit an author in form, like a man at court, where the splendour of dress, and the ceremonial of behaviour, conceal those peculiarities which distinguish one man from another. But reading an author of simplicity is like conversing with a person

You will not find one scientific word in the great masters of the age of Louis XIV. After their example, then, reject all those unusual expressions, which would disguise your thoughts instead of elucidating them; and do not raise any mists between the truth and your auditory.

Quintilian illustrates this rule of taste by a very ingenious comparison, when he says, "that an orator should consider the words of a language like pieces of money, with which he ought not to incommode himself, when they are not current coin." (*Quintil. Instit.* lib. 3.)

SECTION XXXI.

OF DIGNITY OF STYLE.

This popular elocution doth not, however, prohibit a Christian orator from ever making use of elevated expressions.

Nothing stands more opposed to the dignity of the ministry than mean words, indecent allusions, or obscene representations.

Cicero descends to disgusting descriptions in his charges against Verres, and in relating the intemperance of Mark Antony.

Massillon, whose language is generally very guarded, has not paid sufficient respect to the decorum of the pulpit, in his eulogium of St. Agnes.

of distinction at home, and with ease, where we find natural manners and a marked character." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, p. 390.)

The same author elsewhere remarks, "that the style which the pulpit requires must be very perspicuous. As discourses spoken there are calculated for the instruction of all sorts of hearers, plainness and simplicity should reign in them. All unusual, swoln, or high sounding words should be avoided; especially all words that are merely poetical, or merely philosophical. Dignity of expression, which the pulpit requires, is perfectly consistent with simplicity. The words employed may be all plain words, easily understood, and in common use; and yet the style may be abundantly dignified, and at the same time very lively and animated." (*Ibid.* vol. ii, p. 114.)

Boileau says, "The style the least elevated hath still its elevation;" much more rhetorical style, the most dignified, and consequently, the most difficult of all.

Eloquence, in common with poetry, has the happy privilege of embellishing its images with the noblest expressions, which, without this contrivance, could not belong to the style of oratory.

Bossuet excels in that admirable talent of uniting the most familiar narrations to the dignity of his discourses; and he proves by his own example that an able writer will always possess the art of adapting to the style of eloquence whatever could be related in the freedom of conversation.

No excuse can, therefore, be any longer admitted in favour of those orators whose style is mean and grovelling, in relations much less common than some of those which Bossuet has given us in his funeral orations. Such split upon this rock who dwell upon the disorders of every condition of life, instead of attacking the vices which are common to all.

Whenever a preacher neglects to moralize in general terms, he ceases to speak to his auditors a language which interests them all; and thus, one part of the congregation is pleased at finding itself spared, while the other is loaded with the severest reproaches. Whatever paints the various passions which agitate the human heart is excellent; but whatever describes the history of the excesses peculiar to the different conditions which divide society is low.

SECTION XXXII.

OF TRANSITIONS.

The less you multiply those extraneous particulars which have no affinity between themselves, the greater

*unity** your discourse will have; the more will its parts be linked together, and the ideas follow in succession.

* Fenelon presents us with the following valuable observations on this subject:—"Every truth is set by the orator in its proper place with regard to the whole; it prepares, leads on, and supports another truth that needed its assistance. Thus the whole discourse is one; and may be reduced to one single position, set in the strongest light, by various views and explications of it. This unity of design shows the whole performance at one view; as in the public places of a city one may see all the streets and gates of it, when the streets are straight, equal, and duly proportioned. The discourse is the proposition unfolded; and the proposition is an abstract of the discourse."

Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat et unum.

Hor. de Art. Poet. v. 23.

"An author, who does not thus methodize his discourse, is not fully master of his subject: he has but an imperfect taste, and a low genius. Order, indeed, is an excellence we seldom meet with in the productions of the mind. A discourse is perfect when it has at once method, propriety, strength, and vehemence. But in order to this, the orator must have viewed, examined, and comprehended every point, that he may range each word in its proper place. This is what an ignorant declaimer, who is guided by his imagination, can never discern." (*Fenelon on Eloquence*, pp. 180, 181.)

Observe how another sensible author expresses himself:—

"It is an infallible proof of the want of just integrity in every writing, from the Epopeï or heroic poem down to the familiar epistle, or slightest essay, either in verse or prose, if every several part, or portion, fit not its proper place so exactly, that the least transposition would be impracticable. If there be any passage in the middle, or end, which might have stood in the beginning; or any in the beginning which might have stood as well in the middle, or end; there is properly, in such a piece, neither beginning, middle, nor end; it is a mere rhapsody, not a work; and the more it assumes the air or appearance of a real work, the more ridiculous it becomes." (*Characteristics*, vol. iii, pp. 259, 260.)

Bishop Burnet gives the following direction to preachers:—"A text being explained, then the point upon which the sermon is to run is to be opened; and it will be the better heard and understood if there be but one point in a sermon, so that one head, and only one, is well stated, and fully set out." (*Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, p. 249.)

Dr. Blair expands the bishop's idea, and at the same time gives it its proper bounds, when he says:—

The art of forming transitions is as difficult to be subjected to rules as to be reduced to practice.

Bossuet's "History of the Variations" is justly quoted as a masterpiece of this sort, wherein this great man unites all the branches of his subject, by the sole band of his logic; and thus connects, without confusion, the most abstract and dissimilar propositions.

Transitions which are only built on the mechanism of the style, and merely consist in a fictitious connection between the last word of the paragraph which finishes, and the first word of the sentence which begins, cannot, with propriety, be admitted as natural, but are rather forced combinations. True rhetorical transitions are such as follow the course of the reasoning, or sentiment, with

"Unity is of great consequence in every composition; but in other discourses, where the choice and direction of the subject are not left to the speaker, it may be less in his power to preserve it. In a sermon it must be always the preacher's own fault if he transgress it. What I mean by unity, is, that there should be some one main point to which the whole strain of the sermon shall refer. It must not be a bundle of different subjects strung together, but one object must predominate throughout. This rule is founded on what we all experience, that the mind can attend only to one capital object at a time. By dividing, you always weaken the impression. Now this unity, without which no sermon can have much beauty, or much force, does not require that there should be no divisions or separate heads in the discourse, or that one single thought only should be, again and again, turned up to the hearers in different lights. It is not to be understood in so narrow a sense; it admits of some variety; it admits of under parts and appendages, provided always that so much union and connection be preserved as to make the whole concur in some one impression upon the mind. I may employ, for instance, several different arguments to enforce the love of God; I may also inquire, perhaps, into the causes of the decay of this virtue; still one great object is presented to the mind: but if because my text says, "He that loveth God must love his brother also," I therefore should mingle in one discourse arguments for the love of God, and for the love of our neighbour, I should offend unpardonably against unity, and leave a very loose and confused impression on the hearers' minds." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 108.)

ease, almost without art, and unperceived by the hearers; such as unite the materials of the discourse, instead of merely suspending some phrases upon each other; such as bind the whole together without obliging the preacher to compose a new exordium to each subdivision which his plan exhibits to him; such as form an orderly and methodical arrangement by the simple unfolding of the ideas, in some measure, imperceptible to the orator himself: such as call for, and correspond with, each other by an inevitable analogy, and not by an unexpected association; such, in fine, as meditation produces by suggesting valuable thoughts, not such as the pen furnishes in its search after combined resemblances.

Clear and distinct ideas reciprocally accord with easy and felicitous transitions. "Stones well hewn," says Cicero, "unite of themselves, and without the aid of cement."

SECTION XXXIII.

OF A COPIOUS STYLE.

If a desultory style, if short expressions, in a word, if poor ideas can never strictly unite, let us discard them, without hesitation, from a rhetorical discourse. A broken and sententious style will never make powerful impressions upon the multitude. Eloquence requires a kind of diction, expanded, lofty, sublime, in order to develope the emotions of the soul, and to impart to thought all its energy. He who renews his thoughts line by line is always frigid, slow, monotonous, and superficial. Sublimity is simply the effort of genius transcending ordinary ideas. Let your thoughts dive deep. Stop not to pick up the sparkling grains of sand upon that ground which covers a mine of gold. Shoot beyond vulgar conceptions; and you will find the true sublime between that which is

common, and that which is exaggerated. Unconstrained in your steps, confine not yourself within the narrow limits of those curtailed phrases, which drop every moment with the expiring idea; but display, in their vast extent, those copious and commanding modes of expression which impart to eloquence its energy, its elevation, its vehemence, and its grandeur. "The thundering strokes of Demosthenes," said Cicero, "would have been much less impressive, had they not been hurled with all the power and impetuosity of copiousness."*

The same Cicero fixed the extent of the orator's period to four verses of six feet, which can be pronounced with one single breathing.†

But, have we proper periods in our language, who can scarcely ever make use of transposition; who are constrained to give a signification, if not perfect, at least very distinct, to each word of the sentence which the reader peruses; who are subjected to uniform and feeble constructions, in which the nominative is contiguous to the verb preceding the case governed; and who are perpetually embarrassed by the repetition or ambiguity of pronouns? The theory of our participles, too, is so obscure, our conjunctions are so insufficient, our cases, admitting we have any, so insignificant, that it becomes requisite, in writing, perpetually to recall the nominative, or the pronoun which represents it, and to sacrifice sublimity to perspicuity.‡

The ancients compared the period to a sling, which throws out the stone, after many circuits.§ Our period is

* Demosthenis non tàm vibrarent fulmina illa nisi numeris contorta ferentur. (*Orator.* 234.)

† Equatuor igitur quasi hexametrorum instar versuum, quod sit, constat ferè plena comprehensio. (*Orator.* 222.)

‡ See remarks on the same subject in *Fenelon's Letter to the French Academy*, sec. v, p. 193.

§ "With respect to the form or composition of sentences, Cicero distinguishes them into two sorts, called *tracta*, strait or direct: and *contorta*, bend or winding. (Orat. c. 20.) By the former are meant

none other than an inanimate diction, like the servile translation of a precise interpreter, who expresses literally and unskilfully, ideas conceived in a foreign idiom.*

such, whose members follow each other in a direct order, without any inflection; and by the latter, those which, strictly speaking, are called *periods*. Περίοδος in Greek signifies a *circuit* or circle. And so the Latins called *circuitus* and *ambitus*; by which they both mean a sentence consisting of corresponding parts, so framed, that the voice in pronouncing them may have a proper elevation and cadency, and distinguish them by its inflection. And as the latter part returns back and unites with the former, the period, like a circle, surrounds and encloses the whole sense." (*Ward's System of Oratory*, vol. ii, p. 345.)

* The remarks of the learned abbe respecting the feeble and limited construction of the *French* tongue, are, in a great measure, applicable to the *English*, especially when compared with the greater liberty of transposition which the Latin language allowed, and in which Cicero, particularly, manifests that so much of its beauty and elegance consists.

Dr. Ward's observations upon the point are as follows:—"There are two kinds of order in the construction of a sentence, one of which may be called *natural*, and the other *artificial*. We call that order *natural*, when all the words in a sentence are so placed as they are connected with, or follow each other, in a grammatical construction. And it may properly enough admit of this name, as it is founded in the nature of a proposition, and the relation of the several words, of which it consists, to each other. And this seems agreeable to the natural way of conveying our thoughts which leads us first to express the subject, or thing, of which some other thing is said, before the predicate, or that which is said concerning it; and with respect to both, as every idea succeeds another in the order of our conceptions, to range it in the same order, when we communicate them to others.

"Our language in general keeps pretty much to this method. But in one thing, particularly, it recedes from it; and that is in placing adjectives, which denote the properties of things, before their substantives or subjects, whose properties they are. As when it is said, *Evil communication corrupts good manners*. And this we always do, except something follows which depends upon the adjective. So we say, *He was a man eminent for his virtue*, not *an eminent man*.

"*Artificial order*, as it respects simple sentences, has little or no regard to the natural construction of words; but disposes them

SECTION XXXIV.

OF HARMONY OF STYLE.

NEVERTHELESS without this measurement of periods, style is flat and unharmonious. A Christian orator should endeavour to please his auditors by a melody which may

in such a manner as will be most agreeable to the ear, and best answer the design of the speaker. The Latins take a much greater liberty in this respect than we do, or the nature of our language will permit. Quintilian says that it is best for the verb to stand last, when there is no particular reason to the contrary; and he gives this reason for it, "because the force of the sentence lies in the verb." They likewise separate such words as have an immediate relation between them, or dependence one upon another; and place any of them first or last as they please. In short, their order seems in a manner arbitrary, if it does not break in upon perspicuity, to which they usually attend. But most of these things are unsuitable to the genius of our language. The Latin tongue commonly admits of a much greater variety in the transposition of members, as well as in that of single words, than suits with our idiom. Our composition is, in this respect, much more limited and confined than the Latin. The natural order is certainly more plain and easy; but yet it must be owned, that the other has its advantages, and those very considerable. The language both of the Greeks and Romans has more strength, as well as harmony, than any modern tongue, which is owing in a good measure to this liberty in their composition. For by giving their periods the finest turn, and placing the most significant words where they may strike the mind with the greatest force, at the same time they both delight the ear, and excite the attention." (*Ward's System of Oratory*, vol. i, pp. 354–364.)

Dr. Blair makes the following apposite remarks upon this subject:—

"In the Latin language, the arrangement, which most commonly obtains, is to place first in the sentence that word which expresses the principal object of the discourse, together with its circumstances; and afterward the person or the thing that acts upon it. Thus Sallust, comparing together the mind and the body; *Animi imperio, corporis servitio magis utimur*; which order certainly renders the sentence more lively and striking than when it is arranged according to our English construction. We make most use of the direction of the soul, and of the service of the body.

"The Latin order gratifies more the rapidity of the imagination,

make them more attentive to his instructions, and thereby render the allurements of art subservient to the success of his ministry. Our great masters have frequently displayed, in the pulpit, the fine talents of painting by sounds, and of

which naturally runs first to that which is its chief object; and having once named it, carries it in view throughout the rest of the sentence. In the same manner in poetry.

> Justum et tenacem propositi virum,
> Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
> Non vultus instanti tyranni,
> Mente quatit solida.

Every person of taste must be sensible, that here the words are arranged with a much greater regard to the figure which the several objects make in the fancy, than our English construction admits; which would require the *Justum et tenacem propositi virum*, though undoubtedly the capital object in the sentence, to be thrown into the last place.

"An English writer, paying a compliment to a great man, would say thus: 'It is impossible for me to pass over, in silence, such remarkable mildness, such singular and unheard of clemency, and such unusual moderation, in the exercise of supreme power.' Here we have first presented to us the person who speaks. 'It is impossible for *me*;' next, what the person is to do; 'impossible for him *to pass over in silence*;' and lastly, the object which moves him so to do, 'the mildness, clemency, and moderation of his patron.' Cicero, from whom I have translated these words, just reverses this order; beginning with the object, placing that first which was the exciting idea in the speaker's mind, and ending with the speaker and his action. Tantam mansuetudinem, tum inusitatum in auditamque clementiam, tantumque in summa potestate rerum omnium modum, tacitè multo (nullo) modo prætorire possum. (Orat. pro Marcell.)

"The Latin order is more animated; the English more clear and distinct. The Romans generally arranged their words according to the order in which the ideas rose in the speaker's imagination. We arrange them according to the order in which the understanding directs those ideas to be exhibited in succession to the view of another. Our arrangement, therefore, appears to be the consequence of greater refinement in the art of speech; as far as clearness in communication is understood to be the end of speech." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, pp. 119 and 121.)

forming resemblances of imitative harmony, which poetry would find it difficult to equal.

Bossuet meant to intimate in the funeral oration for Tellier, that that magistrate had breathed his last while repeating this verse of the psalm, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever;" and see how the orator recalls, if I may so say, before all his auditory, this circumstance of the death of the chancellor: "Enraptured that he could pour forth his grateful acknowledgments even with his dying breath, he began the hymn of praise for Divine mercies. *I will sing*, says he, *of the mercies of the Lord for ever.* He expires while repeating these words, and continues singing with angels the sacred song."

It is genius alone which can form such excellent pictures, and the art of producing them is above rules; but, it is no less true, that rules of art are often useful to the orator, in laying open to him the chief secrets of harmony.

Never conclude your sentences with monosyllables, unless they are sufficiently sonorous to strike the ear, and to assist the cadence of a period.*

Guard against multiplying words, whose uniform terminations introduce consonances, or rather rhymes, which prose ought to reject. You will find in the organi-

* As a useful caution against the injudicious conclusion of sentiments with monosyllables, we have this reflection:—

"How disagreeable is the following sentence of an author, speaking of the Trinity! 'It is a mystery which we firmly believe the truth of, and humbly adore the depth of.' And how easily could it have been mended by this transposition:—'It is a mystery, the truth of which we firmly believe, and the depth of which we humbly adore.' In general it seems to hold that a musical close, in our language, requires either the last syllable, or the penult, that is, the last but one, to be a long syllable. Words which consist mostly of short syllables, as, *contrary, particular, retrospect*, seldom conclude a sentence harmoniously, unless a run of long syllables before has rendered them agreeable to the ear." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, page 260.)

zation of every language a sort of mechanical harmony, in the use of which we should not too freely indulge.*

SECTION XXXV.

OF VARIETY OF STYLE.

If variety be requisite, even in the termination of words, it is still more indispensable in the construction of the ideas. Uniformity in the manner of expression always implies languor of thought.†

Are you at a loss how to vary your periods? Lay down your pen. Resume meditation; and every trait will soon have its appropriate character and likeness.

The repetition of the same modes of expression, at the commencement of a new division of the subject, succeeds in pulpit style; but, if we wish to preserve the hearers from the weariness which accompanies uniformity, it is peculiarly proper, in the minute opening of such parts, to diversify the expressions and metaphors, and to give a new colouring to each phrase.

The sermons of the Abbé Poulle, which we have heard with so much pleasure, deserve to be quoted, in the first instance, as admirable models of the art of oratory. What principally distinguishes the style of this celebrated

* Our author proceeds to illustrate his meaning, by showing the use to which the final *e* mute may be put in promoting this harmony of sound; and he gives us an apt quotation from Massillon, in his description of the death of a good man. But, as in this part of the author's enlargement, his remarks are confined to the puculiarities and terminations of the French language, the editor has omitted them in his translation, as being useless to the mere English reader. On the subject of "Harmony of Sounds and Sentences," the reader is referred to Blair's 12th Lecture throughout, where he will find many ingenious and critical observations;—also to Ward's System of Oratory, vol. i, p. 367, et seq.

† Variare Orationem magnoperè oportebit, nam omnibus in rebus similitudo satietatis est mater. (*Cicer. de invent.* lib. 1, 76.)

writer, is that inexhaustible fertility of a brilliant imagination, which continually changes his descriptions, his movements, his language; and which, though discovering every moment the genius of an orator under a variety of forms, always retains the simplicity that is inseparably connected with real ability.

SECTION XXXVI.

OF PERSPICUITY.

Let us guard, however, against sacrificing perspicuity to variety; and never become obscure and unintelligible, in the pursuit of synonyma, or periphrases, with a view to avoid the repetition of the same expression or turn of thought. The intention of speaking is to be understood.

The Greeks, whose language painted to the mind, and often to the eyes, the signification, and even the functions of each word, called the voice *light.** Dionysius of Halicarnassus compared Demosthenes to a fire, kindled in the midst of the public places of Athens, enlightening and inflaming a people, equally blind and insensible to their true interests.

Such, indeed, should be the perspicuity of eloquence, as indiscriminately to strike every mind. The orator should continually ask himself, when he revises his productions, "What was it I meant to express?—have I expressed it?" The more simple the expression, the greater its perspicuity: this simplicity always imparts to it double energy.†

It is judgment which points out the propriety of the word; and it is the propriety of the expression which

* Gr. φωνη, vox, a φάω, inusit. lucco. (*Hederic. Lex. in verbum.*)

† "Perspicuity ought not to be sacrificed to any other beauty whatever. If it should be doubted whether perspicuity be a positive beauty, it cannot be doubted that the want of it is the greatest defect. Nothing, therefore, in language ought to be more studied

renders it perspicuous. But, to give perspicuity to the ideas, it is requisite to be thoroughly informed. The writer, who is necessitated to learn while he composes, is generally obscure. He, on the contrary, who hath, during a length of time, brought his knowledge to maturity, becomes sufficiently master of his subject to banish from his style ambiguity, double entendre, and declamation.

than to prevent all obscurity in the expression; for to have no meaning is but one degree worse than to have a meaning that is not understood." (*Elements of Criticism*, c. xviii, sec. 2, pp. 20, 54.)

"Perspicuity," says Dr. Blair, "is the fundamental quality of style; a quality so essential in every kind of writing, that, for the want of it, nothing can atone. Without this the richest ornaments of style only glimmer through the dark; and puzzle instead of pleasing, the reader. This, therefore, must be our first object, to make our meaning clearly and fully understood, and understood without the least difficulty. 'Oratio,' says Quintilian, 'debet negligente quoque audientibus esse aperta: ut in animum audientis, sicut sol in oculos, etiamsi in eum non intendatur, occurat. Quare non solum ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere curandum.' If we are obliged to follow a writer with much care, to pause, and to read over his sentences a second time, in order to comprehend them fully, he will never please us long. Mankind are too indolent to relish so much labour. They may pretend to admire the author's depth, after they have discovered his meaning; but they will seldom be inclined to take up his work a second time.

"The great source of a loose style, in opposition to precision, is the injudicious use of those words termed *synonymous*. They are so called, because they agree in expressing one principal idea; but, for the most part, if not always, they express it with some diversity in the circumstances. They are varied by some accessory idea which every word introduces, and which forms the distinction between them. Hardly, in any language, are there two words that convey precisely the same idea; a person thoroughly conversant in the propriety of the language, will always be able to observe something that distinguishes them. As they are like different shades of the same colour, an accurate writer can employ them to great advantage, by using them so as to heighten and to finish the picture which he gives us. He supplies by one, what was wanting in the other, to the force, or to the lustre of the image which he means to exhibit. But, in order to this end, he must be extremely attentive to the choice which he makes of them. For the bulk of writers are very apt to

Obscurity proceeds from ignorance, when the expression is void of sense; from design, when it is far-fetched; from negligence, when the thought is confused; and from depravity of taste, when the word is more abstract than the idea. The style of sacred eloquence ought to be clear, and in some sort, transparent. The rapidity of utterance, which never allows time for examination, requires, in a sermon, all the perspicuity of the most familiar language.*

confound them with each other; and to employ them carelessly, merely for the sake of filling up a period, or of rounding and diversifying the language, as if their signification were exactly the same, while, in truth, it is not. Hence a certain mist and indistinctness is unwarily thrown over style." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, pp. 185, 195.)

The whole of Dr. Blair's Lecture on *Perspicuity* and *Precision* of style, is well worth perusal. (See also, on this subject, *Ward's System of Oratory*, vol. i, p. 310, &c.)

* "We should use," says Fenelon, "a simple, exact, easy style, that lays every thing open to the reader, and even prevents his attention. When an author writes for the public, he should take all the pains imaginable to prevent his reader's having any. All the labour should be his own; and he should leave nothing but pleasure and instruction to his readers. They should never be put to the trouble of finding out his meaning. None but those who deal in riddles are allowed to puzzle people. Augustus would rather have frequent repetitions used than that there should be the least degree of obscurity in a discourse. Indeed the first care of one that writes only to be understood, is to ease his readers by expressing himself clearly." (*Fenelon's Letter to the French Academy*, sec. v, p. 194.)

"Nobis prima sit virtus perspicuitas, propria verba, rectus ordo, non in longum dilata conclusio; nihil neque desit, neque superfluat. Ita sermo et doctis probabilis, et planus imperitis est." (*Quint. Inst.* lib. viii, c. 2.)

M. Rollin enforces the observations of M. Maury respecting the importance of perspicuity in public speakers when he says, "It is a vicious taste in some orators to imagine that they have a great deal of understanding when much is required to comprehend them. Such do not consider that every discourse which wants an interpreter is a very bad one. The supreme perfection of a speaker's style should be to please the unlearned as well as the learned, by exhibiting an abundance of graces for the latter, and being very perspicuous for the former. St. Austin wrote at first against the Manichees in a

SECTION XXXVII.

OF STRIKING PASSAGES.

PERSPICUITY is never prejudicial either to depth or energy. The more striking a passage is, the clearer should be the expression. One loves to find in a sermon some of those grand and new ideas which delight, as if they were the fruit of our own invention; for "truth," says Fontenelle, "enters so naturally into the mind, that when it is at first apprehended it seems as if nothing more were necessary than to call it to remembrance."* Such is the sentiment we experience when reading this sublime passage of Bossuet:—"God, in the sacred Scriptures, derides idols which bear the title of gods. Where are your gods," saith he to the people, "those gods in whom

flowery and sublime style; whence his writings were unintelligible to those who had but a moderate share of learning, at least not without great difficulty. Upon this he was told that if he desired to have his works more generally useful, he must write in the plain and common style, so as to be equally intelligible to the learned and the unlearned. The holy father received this advice with his usual humility, and made proper use of it in the books he afterward wrote against the heretics, and in his sermons. His example ought to be the standard of all those who are to instruct others.

"As obscurity is the fault which the preacher must chiefly avoid, and as his auditors are not allowed to interrupt him when they meet with any thing obscure, St. Austin advises him to read in the eyes and countenances of his auditors whether they understand him or not; and to repeat the same thing by giving it different turns, till he perceives he is understood." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, c. iii, sec. iv, pp. 305-307.)

Dr. Ward ascribes obscurity chiefly to the three following causes: First, all ambiguity of expression, arising from the different senses in which a word is capable of being taken. Again, obscurity is occasioned either by too short and concise a manner of speaking, or by sentences too long and prolix. And a third cause of obscurity he states to be parenthesis, when it is either too long or too frequent. He gives examples under each head. (See *System of Oratory*, vol. i, pp. 327-335.)

* Plurality of Worlds. Second evening.

you have put your trust? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection, Deut. xxxii, 37, 38. Observe, my brethren, that this great God, this true God, and he who alone deserves by his beneficence the majesty of this title, would have us understand that it is an insufferable dignity to bear the name of God without supporting so great a name by extensive beneficence. This noble idea of power is far different from that which the mighty of the earth form in their minds. They imagine that their grandeur shines forth more by laying waste, than by conferring benefits; by wars, by carnage, by the proud enterprises of those destroyers of provinces whom we call conquerors."*

Such also is the admiration excited by that beautiful passage in the funeral oration for Louis XV., by M. de Beavais, bishop of Sennes, who, in this kind of Christian eloquence, possesses a reputation as brilliant as it is merited.

"The people, doubtless, have no right to murmur; but they have also, undoubtedly, the right to keep silence; and their silence is the lesson of kings."

SECTION XXXVIII.

OF COMMON PLACES.

Such strokes enliven a sermon, and leave in the mind of the auditor an indelible impression. The more they are multiplied in a discourse, the higher we soar above those diffuse writers, whose productions, being destitute of genius, are a mere collection of common places.

By common places, I mean, here, loose details equally applicable to all subjects: for every subject has its common places, which will become apposite and peculiar in the mouth of an energetic and original orator.

* Fragment of a sermon "on the means of sanctifying grandeur," for the fourth Sunday of Lent.

Enter a church in the middle of a sermon: if, in a minute, you do not discern the drift of the discourse; if you be obliged to wait to the end of a division in order to penetrate the design of the preacher, pronounce confidently that he wanders in a labyrinth of common places; that he hath not composed through inspiration; and that he labours hard to make up, by the redundancy of words, for the sterility of ideas.

What then will you discover in his inexhaustible loquacity? disgusting repetitions, or extravagant conceptions; plagiarisms or imitations; an incurable facility of uttering expressions which always leave the mind empty; pitiful proofs of a beggarly mediocrity, from which nothing can be expected; and discourses, of which all the contents were known before they were heard.

Hence arise those frequent enumerations, which are only a redundancy of words, sometimes as dazzling in the delivery as they are insipid in the perusal. Such puerile figures have been, for a long time, applauded by a great many hearers, who regarded, as the noblest effort of human genius, the mechanical talent of collecting into one period accumulated substantives, crowded epithets, rapid contradictions, unexpected antitheses, trivial or unnatural metaphors, repetitions re-echoed, abundance of synonymous words, symmetry of combinations, and unceasing contrasts.

But it hath been at length understood that this tiresome prating was not true eloquence, and it is now become disgustful.

Guard against tedious enumerations, which occasion you such painful efforts of memory, and are so soon forgotten.

When an orator studies his sermon he is the best judge of it; and experience daily teaches him that the passages which he finds the greatest difficulty to commit to memory scarcely ever deserve to be learned.

SECTION XXXIX.

OF ORATORICAL PREPARATION.

CONNECTED arguments imprint themselves more easily on the memory than those collections of words which are destitute of ideas; and, especially, when the progress of eloquence is advanced by a combination of proofs.

The difficult and necessary art of oratorial preparation is sure to be decisive of the success of a sermon.

A sudden stroke is merely a hasty sally; if it be well prepared it becomes a sublime movement.

May I be permitted to render my idea more familiar by a comparison? You walk by yourself in the fields on a summer's day. You give scope successively to a variety of thoughts, with which the view of the country, and the silence of nature, inspire you. When your mind is thus wholly engaged with these pleasing reveries, all of a sudden you hear thunder which crashes at a distance. This noise at first alarms you. In the meantime, the sky is serene, the air is calm, all is tranquil about you; and this first impression of terror is soon erased from your memory. But, when the horizon lowers, and is covered with dark clouds; when the sun disappears; when the hurricane rolls whirlwinds of dust; when the lightning flashes; when the atmosphere is inflamed; and when the thunder afterward roars over your head; you will be alarmed; and your mind, prepared by gradual emotions, will then have a more lively sensation of the violence of the shock arising from such continued perturbation. It is the same with eloquence. Through a multitude of adventitious ideas, the mind must be gradually prepared to participate in all the transports of passion or terror, of joy or grief, of love or indignation, with which you yourself are agitated. The impression too soon wears off, if the heart be not sufficiently mollified to enable it to penetrate without meeting with opposition.

Doth Bossuet intend to give you a high idea of the courage with which the queen of England struggled against all her misfortunes? His relations, were they introduced even without art, would astonish you; but, when ushered in by this sublime image, they transport you: "Like a column, whose solid mass appears the firm support of a ruinous temple, when that lofty edifice which it sustains rests upon it without overthrowing it; thus the queen discovers herself to be the firm support of the state, when, after having for a long time borne its weight, she is not even bowed down under its fall." Your mind, struck with this spectacle, which the orator had the art of representing before you, beholds the queen of England constantly raised above her adversities: and your imagination is continually describing to itself this column, which remains standing in the midst of the ruins with which it is surrounded.

SECTION XL.

OF ORATORIAL PRECAUTIONS.

Beside those preparations which tend to set off excellent ideas to advantage, there are also precautions which orators ought not to neglect. Precautions of modesty, with a view to conciliate the good will, or confidence, of their auditory: precautions of complaisance, in order to apologize for ideas which would appear too bold if they bluntly thwarted the prejudices intended to be opposed: precautions of prudence: appear as if you dared not accuse your hearers of certain excesses, of which they are but too culpable, and which the remorse of their consciences affect still more than the reproaches of your zeal. "When you make known unpalatable truths," says Cicero, "it is proper that you seem to do it with reluct-

ance:"* precautions of decency: throw a veil over particulars, to which you ought to refer, without too minutely investigating them. Bossuet does not choose to say in direct terms, in his funeral oration for the queen of England, that Charles I. died upon a scaffold; but, to recall that event, he makes an ingenious application; he contents himself with causing the queen to adopt those words of the Prophet Jeremiah, who alone, he says, is capable of equalling his lamentations to his calamities: "O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself. The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all my pleasant things: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed. The kingdom is polluted, and the princes thereof. For these things I weep; mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me," Lam. i, 9, 16, and ii, 2. Precautions of judgment: write agreeably to, and sometimes in a style different from, your peculiar talent. Is it the pathetic that characterizes you? Guard against languor and monotony. Doth energy please you? Avoid obscurity and bombast. Observe the extreme toward which your mind inclines, and endeavour to shun it: precautions in the cadences of sentences; and particularly in beginning paragraphs. The auditor forms his opinion of you whenever the conclusion of your periods leaves him a moment's pause; and his attention relaxes if you neglect to terminate your compositions with luminous ideas, or striking images: in a word, precautions of courage, occasioned by subjects which present difficulties, where you are attended to with an equal mixture of eagerness and severity.

Throw yourself at once into the midst of the danger, that you may the better display the resources of your genius, and make your attack while put upon your de-

* Si quid persequare acriùs et invitus et coactus facere videare. (*Cic. de Orat.* lib. ii, sec. 182, p. 62.)

fence. This risk, to which the orator exposes himself, imparts to eloquence a glow of enthusiasm which raises him superior to his usual exertions. It then happens to him,—may I be forgiven this comparison?—as to the soldier who said, while passing under the citadel of Namur, the day following the assault, "Yesterday I stormed this rock in the midst of fire, and to-day I should not be able to mount it." "I firmly believe it," replied one of his comrades, "nor can I—there is no more any firing against us."

SECTION XLI.

OF HYPOTHESIS.

It is evident, that on such hazardous occasions, the great business of an orator consists in omitting no precautions, and in adding energy to art.

It is an excellent method to make choice of a proper and ingenious circumlocution to convey the meaning of what cannot be so well expressed. The hypothesis is a figure well adapted to yield this resource to eloquence. Cicero often uses it in his orations, and especially in those against Verres, where he is every moment forming suppositions more striking than the facts, with a view to render the exactions of Verres odious to the people of Rome.

Bossuet, whom I am perpetually quoting, because I know not a better model, hath made an admirable use of hypothesis in his funeral oration for Tellier:—"Sleep on, ye rich men of the earth, and remain in your native dust. Ah! if some ages—what do I say? if some years after your death ye may become men forgotten in the midst of the world, ye should hasten to enter into your tombs, that ye may not behold your names tarnished, your memories extinguished, and your foresight deceived in your friends and dependents, and still more in your heirs and children.

Is this, then, the fruit of the toil with which ye have been consumed under the sun?"

SECTION XLII.

OF EGOTISM OF STYLE.

Let us reckon also among oratorical precautions, a studied attention never to speak about one's self in the pulpit.

Flechier,* who, in the composition of his funeral oration for Turenne, stands in the foremost rank of orators, although he do not delineate the excellent character of his hero in private life, and his discourse be in other respects far inferior to the chief performances of Bossuet, affords us, in a letter which is prefixed to his funeral orations, a singular example of egotism and vanity. He draws his own portrait in this letter; and one would imagine that he is sending to his friend the materials for a panegyric; or rather, it is a complete eulogium, in which he forms sparkling antitheses from the recital and contrast of his various merits. See how Flechier describes himself in this passage: he tells us that he hath a sort of "genius capable of executing whatever he undertakes; his style is nature approaching to art, and art resembling nature. Nothing can be added to what he writes, without superfluity, nor retrenched without removing something necessary.

* "What is most distinguishable in M. Flechier, is a purity of diction, elegance of style, rich and florid expressions, beautiful thoughts, a prudent vivacity of imagination, and the consequence of it, that is, a wonderful art in painting objects, and making them, as it were, sensible and obvious. But then, I think a kind of monotony and uniformity runs through all his writings; he has every where almost the same turns, the same figures, the same method. The antithesis engrosses very near all his thoughts, and often enervates, by an endeavour to embellish them." (*Rollin's Belles Lettres*, b. iii, c. 11, vol. ii, p. 39.)

He can scatter some grains of odoriferous incense to refresh, and yet not overpower; but he accepts of none which are not equally pure with those which he bestows. There is discernible in his eyes a certain something corresponding with his genius. After all, it would be better if he could inure himself to study, and if his memory, somewhat treacherous, without however being unfaithful, were equally serviceable to him as his genius. But there is no perfection in the world, and every one hath his weak side." It were to be wished, for the honour of Flechier, that posterity had confirmed this judgment, which he passed upon himself.

It is, without doubt, an unnecessary apprehension, that a Christian orator could ever suffer himself to advance, in the pulpit, an egotism so preposterous. It is always dangerous to speak about one's self before a large assembly. We are even careful to avoid this absurdity in small companies; and it appears to me, that it was owing to good taste, as much as to Christian humility, that the word *I* was banished from the writings of Port-Royal.

The Abbé de Fleury says, that the historian should himself be kept out of view in his narration, "so that the reader may not have leisure to reflect, whether the facts recorded be written well or ill; whether they be written at all; whether he have a book in his hands; whether there be an author in the world. It is thus that Homer wrote."*

* What the amiable Fenelon says of poets, and which he strengthens with the sanction of Plato's judgment, may, with equal propriety, be applied to historians. "The poems of Homer and Virgil are full of a noble simplicity; their art is entirely concealed; nature itself appears in all that they say. We do not find a single word that seems purposely designed to show the poet's wit. They thought it their greatest glory never to appear, but to employ our attention on the objects they describe; as a painter endeavours to set before your eyes wild forests, mountains, rivers, distant views, and buildings; or the adventures, actions, and different passions of men, in such a

Now, if a historian be not suffered to attempt to show himself in his relations, doubtless a preacher ought to be more attentive to keep himself out of the view of his auditory.*

lively manner, that you cannot trace the masterly strokes of his pencil, for art looks mean and coarse when it is perceived. Plato, who hath thoroughly examined this matter, assures us, that in composing, the poet [so also the historian or preacher] should always keep out of sight, make himself to be quite forgotten by his readers, and represent only those things and persons which he would set before their eyes." (*Fenelon's Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, p. 63.)

Mr. Knox tells us, that his "opinion coincides with that of the best judges of antiquity, that the diction of the historian should not be such, either in the construction or selection of words, as to allure the attention of the reader from the facts to the words, from the hero to the writer." The same author condemns "some of the most popular historians of France, who have violated the gravity and dignity of the historic page, by perpetual attempts to be witty." And he adds, "though the works of such may afford pleasure, it is not such as results from legitimate history. The writer evidently labours to destroy himself, and his own ingenuity: but it is one great secret in the art of writing, that the writer should keep himself out of sight, and cause the ideas which he means to convey fully to engross the reader's attention. They cannot indeed otherwise produce their proper effect. If there are any readers, who choose to have the writer present to their view, rather than the matter which he writes, they may be said to resemble those spectators who go to the theatre, rather to see and hear a favourite actor, than to attend to the persons of the drama. It is not Shakspeare's Hamlet, or Lear, whom they admire, but some name which stands in rubric characters on the walls and in the play bills." (*Knox's Essays*, vol. i, No. 23, p. 110.)

Of historians, who write of themselves with propriety, Cesar, Xenophen, and Polybius are the most remarkable; to which number may be added St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles; and Capt. Cook among the moderns.

Whoever wishes for farther information on the subject of history and its style, may consult *Ward's System of Oratory*, vol. ii, pp. 230–236; also *Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. iii, b. iv, p. 1, and *Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 293.

* Let us hear what M. Claude says on this subject:—"When it was needful to exalt the grace of God, St. Paul spoke of his raptures, miracles, and visions; and when it was needful to show the faithful-

There are occasions, however, when an orator becomes himself the subject of an argument, which interests the public, and when he may speak of himself, without being personal. Where can I find a better example to illustrate this precept, than in the following passage of Fontenelle, in his treatise, "on Happiness," (a work written with distinguished and vast precision:) "It is necessary, first of all, to investigate the pretensions of that which boasts of contributing to our happiness. Wherefore is this dignity I am pursuing so necessary for me? It is so that I may have the pre-eminence before others. But wherefore

ness of his conduct in discharging his ministry against the bold accusations of his enemies, he recounted his voyages, labours, and persecutions; but when he had a law to impose upon men's consciences, or a doctrine of faith, or a rule of conduct to establish, he introduced it only with the name of God. Nothing but what is divine; no consideration at all of man is mentioned here; for faith and conscience acknowledge no authority but that of God, nor obey any voice but that of the common master of all creatures. *We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants*, says the apostle elsewhere. Herein he resembles the prophets, who, when they advanced any thing, always used this preface, *Thus saith the Lord.*" (*Claude's Essay on the composition of a sermon*, vol. ii, p. 316.)

"Let young and fashionable divines take care, as they will answer it to Him in whose name they ascend the pulpit, not to preach themselves, but the Gospel; not to be so solicitous in the display of a white hand, as of a pure heart, of a diamond ring, as of a shining example." (*Knox's Essays*, No. cxxiii.)

A celebrated preacher among the dissenters, now deceased, the Rev. Mr. R——n, in a charge which he delivered to a young minister at his ordination, thus addressed him:—"Let me remind you, sir, that when you come into this place, and address this people, you are never to bring your *little self* with you. I repeat this again, sir, that it may more deeply impress your memory: I say, that you are never to bring your *little self* with you: no, sir, when you stand in this sacred place, it is your duty to hold up your great Master to your people, in his character, in his office, in his precepts, in his promises, and in his glory. This picture you are to hold up to the view of your hearers, while you are to stand behind it, and not so much as your little finger must be seen."

should this be necessary? That I may receive their respect and homage. But of what service to me is this homage and respect? They will very much caress me. But in what estimation can I hold those caresses which are paid to my dignity, and not to myself?"

In thus making application to himself of a general maxim, the Christian orator reasons in the name of his auditory. All other egotism is forbidden him.

Bossuet affects me when he speaks of his white hairs. Bourdaloue penetrates me with a sacred veneration when he apologizes for his sermon, "on Impurity," in his "homily of Magdalen." But it is the privilege of these great masters to fall into such sort of digressions; and yet they never allow themselves in them unnecessarily, nor without attaining a vigour of genius, which renders all excusable.

SECTION XLIII.

OF BOURDALOUE.

What I am chiefly pleased with and admire in Bourdaloue, is, his keeping himself out of sight; that with a style too often sacrificed to declamation, he never strains Christian duties, never converts simple advices into positive precepts, but his morality is such as can always be reduced to practice. It is the inexhaustible fertility of his plans, which are never alike, and the happy talent of arranging his arguments with that order of which Quintilian speaks, when he compares the merit of an orator who composes a discourse, to the skill of a general who commands an army;* it is that accurate and forcible logic which excludes sophisms, contradictions, paradoxes; it is the art with which he establishes our duty upon our interest, and that valuable secret which I seldom see but in his sermons, of converting the recital of conversations into proofs of

* Est velut Imperatoria virtus. (*Instit.* 2.)

his subject; it is that redundancy of genius, which, in his discourses, leaves nothing farther to be supposed, although he composed at least two, often three, sometimes even four sermons on the same subject, without our even knowing, after having read them, to which to give the preference: it is the simplicity of a style, nervous and affecting, natural and noble: the profoundest knowledge of religion; the admirable use which he makes of the Scriptures, and of the fathers; these are the talents which never permit me to think of this great man without saying to myself, "See then to what an elevation genius may be raised when it is invigorated by study!" What can be more beautiful and inimitable in Christian eloquence than the first parts of the sermons of Bourdaloue "on the Conception," "the Passion," and "the Resurrection!"*

* "Among the Roman Catholic preachers the two most eminent are Bourdaloue and Massillon. It is a subject of dispute among the French critics to which of these the preference is due, and each of them have their several partizans. To Bourdaloue they attribute more solidity and close reasoning; to Massillon a more pleasing and engaging manner: Bourdaloue is indeed a great reasoner, and inculcates his doctrines with much zeal, piety, and earnestness; but his style is verbose, he is disagreeably full of quotations from the fathers, and he wants imagination. Massillon has more grace, more sentiment, and, in my opinion, every way more genius. He discovers much knowledge both of the world and of the human heart; he is pathetic and persuasive; and, upon the whole, is perhaps the most elegant writer of sermons which modern times have produced." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 120.)

M. Crevier, in his *Rhetorique Francoise*, makes the following critical comparison of celebrated French orators:—"Bossuet is sublime, but unequal; Flechier is more equal, but less sublime, and often too flowery; Bourdaloue is solid and judicious, but he neglects the lighter ornaments. Massillon is richer in imagery, but less cogent in reasoning. I would not, therefore, have an orator content himself with the imitation of one of these models, but rather that he strive to combine in himself the different qualities of each." (Vol. ii, *ad. fin.*)

SECTION XLIV.

OF MASSILLON.

His rival Massillon seldom hath sublime strokes; but if he be inferior in his peculiar fame as an orator, he is, doubtless, of the first rank as a writer. No one has carried the excellence of style to a higher degree of perfection. He attended to this branch of eloquence to the latest period of his life.

There were found in his port-folio after his death twelve transcripts of his sermons, which he revised with unwearied pains after his advancement to the episcopacy, and which, of course, have never been delivered from the pulpit, such as we now read them.

Massillon retained in his old age all the purity of his taste, although he had lost the vivacity of his imagination. He then employed himself much more upon the style than upon the main points of his discourses; but he was always unwilling to revise his course of *Lent Sermons*,* which he had written at first with much care; and I do not mean to attack the glory of the immortal Massillon; I intend, on the contrary, to render him fresh homage in boldly advancing, that this, which has for a long time been quoted as his chief work, appears to me one of his feeblest rhetorical productions.

Massillon's plans are all alike; and beside this sameness which is so perceptible, when we read his sermons in succession, he generally confines himself to combat excuses, and perhaps does not sufficiently search beforehand into the bottom of his subjects.

He was born with very great talents for eloquence; but he was not sufficiently studious in his youth. He depended too much upon his quickness of parts; and we may say respecting him what the Roman orator said of Piso, "As

* Fr. son petit Carême.

much as he withheld from application, so much he diminished his glory."* Yes, it is my admiration of him; it is my reading him over and over every day with delight that emboldens me to apply to him the charge which Cardinal de Retz brought against the great Condé, when he blames him for "not having merited all that he might." (*Memoirs*, vol. i.)

How superior would Massillon really have been to himself were all his sermons as eloquent and perfect as his "Ecclesiastical Conferences;" his discourses "on the Forgiveness of Enemies;" "on the Death of a Sinner;" "on Confession;" "on the Divinity of Jesus Christ;" "on the Mixture of the Righteous and the Wicked;" his homily "of the Prodigal Son," &c. In these we have Massillon's most masterly performances; it is here we discover all his genius; while we regret that he hath not bestowed more time upon the composition of his other works.†

This excellent writer, misled by his copiousness, frequently fails in not sufficiently enriching his beautiful style with ideas; and he would unquestionably lose much of his celebrity, were he to be judged according to this maxim of Fenelon: "A good discourse is that from which nothing can be retrenched without cutting into the quick." (*Letter upon Eloquence.*)

Massillon's arguments are sometimes destitute of regularity, of energy, perhaps even of the solidity which he was so capable of giving them.

Could it be believed, that, in his sermon "on the Certainty of a Future State," which is, in other respects,

* Quantum detraxit ex studio, tantum amisitè gloria. (*Brutus*, 236.)

† The late Dr. Dodd published a translation of Massillon's sermons preached before Louis XV. during his minority. They were called "Sermons on the Duties of the Great," and inscribed to the prince of Wales.

The Rev. Dr. Milne has published a volume of sermons professedly in imitation of Massillon and other French writers.

full of beauty and energy, Massillon seriously refutes, and more than once, the frivolous objection that another state of existence is incredible, because no one ever returned from it? The French orator, so styled by way of pre-eminence, Bossuet, has also deigned to take notice of this plea of sinners, who would call for miraculous apparitions, not to convince them of the soul's immortality, but to determine their conversion. One expression at the close of the funeral oration for Queen Henrietta (the most pathetic of all his discourses) suffices him to confute, by a sublime stroke, this absurd demand. It were to be wished that Massillon had often copied this boldness of the pencil! "Do we expect God to raise the dead in order to instruct us? It is by no means necessary that the dead return, nor that any one rise out of the grave; that which to-day descends into the tomb might be sufficient to convert us."

SECTION XLV.

OF SAURIN.

We sometimes discover such passages after the manner of Bossuet, in the sermons of the Pastor Saurin, whom we ought to insert at the head of preachers of the second class.*

The first part of his discourses generally consists of a commentary upon his text. In my opinion, all his critical discussions upon history, grammar, or chronology, are extremely different from eloquence.

Beside, the show of erudition, with which Saurin

* Among the French Protestant divines, Saurin is the most distinguished; he is copious, eloquent, and devout, though too ostentatious in his manner." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 120.)

The sermons of the late Rev. C. Chais, preached at the French church at the Hague, have also considerable merit in his pulpit eloquence.

imposes on so many of his readers, ought not to be held of any account, even if all this scientific dress were not mistimed, inasmuch as it is no very difficult task to copy commentators, or to translate dissertations.

On this account, therefore, when you read Saurin, do not stop short at any of the first parts of his discourses. This manner of writing, which, at the beginning of this century was called "the refugee style," has been charged against him on substantial grounds. He uses a translation of the Bible which was made immediately after the separation of the Protestant Churches; and this old language, contrasted with his modern eloquence, imparts to his style a savage and barbarous air. I might quote examples if his sermons were not so diffuse.

Saurin, however, writes with ardour and vehemence. He doth not make an ostentatious show of wit; he doth not lose sight of his auditory; he forcibly urges his arguments: he knows when to insist upon them; he is moved, and he inflames. He hath the merit of being a natural orator: and he would have acquired the taste in which he is deficient if he had joined to the study of examples, the residence of Paris.

No Christian orator, after Bossuet, (to whom there can be none compared when speaking of pulpit eloquence,) hath laboured more carefully the perorations of his discourses. In them Saurin always recalled the idea of death. This object renders them as solemn as they are affecting. They commonly consist of repetitions; and this return of the same set of expressions is very proper when making the application of a sermon to the different classes of hearers. It is by this figure that he recapitulates his proofs; and then he points to the open grave, as if the listening congregation, ready to descend into it, were not thenceforward to hear any other instruction, or rather, as if he himself were preaching for the last time.

The sermons of Saurin, "on the wisdom of Solomon,"

and "on the discourse of St. Paul to Felix and Drusilla," appear to me the master-pieces of this orator.

It is commonly supposed that he never allowed himself to make use of declamations against the Church of Rome; but I apprehend that fanaticism cannot break out more passionately than in his sermons on the "dedication of the Church of Woorburg;" on "the afflictions of the Church;" "on the incomprehensibility of God;" on "the fast observed before the campaign of 1706."

Saurin is transformed. He rises to the level of Demosthenes when he speaks of the emigration of the Protestants; above all, when he thunders against Louis XIV. He is never more eloquent, nor more sublime, than when wasting his fury against this monarch, whose name perpetually recurs in his discourses, and principally in the sermons which I am about to quote.

This apostrophe is well known:—"And thou, formidable prince, whom I once honoured as my king, and whom I still regard as the scourge of the Lord," &c. Saurin finishes this passage by saying, that he forgives Louis XIV.; but he does not attempt to impress this insulting moderation on the minds of the people of Holland. It is, perhaps, in the pulpit of Saurin, where have been fabricated the arms of Hochstet, of Malplaquet, and Rammillies; and where that implacable resentment hath been produced which presided at the conferences of Gertruidemberg.

Never did an orator conceive any thing more daring than the dialogue of Saurin between God and his auditory, in his sermon "on the fast of 1706." "My people," saith the Most High, "my people, what have I done unto thee?" "Ah, Lord! how many things hast thou done unto us! the ways of Zion covered with mourning," &c. "Answer and bear witness here against the Eternal."

The long enumeration of the afflictions of the Protestants, which precedes these last words, gives them an

energy which causes one to tremble, at the very moment when Saurin pauses in order to vindicate the ways of Providence.*

In his sermon "on the contempt of life," he falls into a digression, which, at first, appears whimsical, but which presently introduces a sublime passage. "An author has published a book with a very singular title; this title is *Rome Subterranean;* a title full of instruction and truth, teaching that Rome which strikes the senses, that there is another Rome of dead people, another Rome under ground, a natural image of that which living Rome must one day be. My brethren, I present unto you this day a similar object; I present unto you your republic, not such as you see it, composed of sovereigns, of generals, of the heads of families; this is merely the surface of your republic. But I would describe before you the interior, the republic subterranean—for there is another republic under your feet. Descend there—survey those sepulchres which are in the heart of the earth. Let us lift up a stone. Whom do we see there? My God! what inhabitants! what citizens! what a republic!"

The same orator who wrote this passage, so full of vivacity and enthusiasm, sometimes suffered his genius to cool, and then he adopted the forms of expression which are used in solving geometrical problems.

* See a translation of select sermons of Saurin, by Robinson: in which the animated passage referred to by M. Maury, is thus rendered:—"Say now, in the presence of heaven and earth, what ills hath God inflicted on you. O my people, what have I done unto thee? Ah, Lord, how many things hast thou done to us! Draw near ye mourning ways of Zion, ye desolate gates of Jerusalem, ye sighing priests, ye afflicted virgins, ye deserts peopled with captives, ye disciples of Jesus Christ, wandering over the face of the whole earth, children torn from your parents, prisons filled with confessors, galleys freighted with martyrs, blood of our countrymen, shed like water, carcasses, once the venerable habitation of witnesses for religion, now thrown out to savage beasts and birds of prey, ruins of our churches, dust, ashes, sad remains of houses dedicated to our

We even find in one of his discourses a pretty long arithmetical calculation; it is, I believe, the only example of this sort, which the eloquence of the pulpit affords.*

The following is to be found in his sermon on "the numbering of our days." "I suppose that the devotion of this day hath drawn eighteen hundred persons to this exercise. I reduce these eighteen hundred persons to six classes:—

"The *first*, of persons between ten and twenty years, consisting of five hundred and thirty	530
The *second*, of those between twenty and thirty years, consisting of four hundred and forty	440
The *third*, of those between thirty and forty years, consisting of three hundred and forty-five	345
The *fourth*, of those from forty to fifty years, consisting of two hundred and fifty-five	255
The *fifth*, of those from forty to sixty years, consisting of one hundred and sixty	160
And the *sixth*, of those who are about seventy years, and upward, consisting of seventy	70
	1800

God, fires, racks, gibbets, punishments till now unknown; draw nigh hither, and give evidence against the Lord." (*Saurin's sermon*, entitled, *God's Controversy with Israel*, vol. iv, p. 121.)

* Dr. Priestley, in his funeral discourse on the death of Dr. Price, introduces a pretty singular calculation and idea, founded upon the supposition of the soul's sleeping between death and the resurrection:—

"Supposing the amount of the expectation of life to be in my case, as I find, about fourteen years, in many of you not more than half that number, and at the most not much more than twenty, in those whose

"According to the computation of those who have applied themselves to such sort of inquiries, each of these classes will furnish at death a yearly tribute of ten persons; and upon this principle, there must die this year sixty of my hearers; upon the same principle, in ten years there will remain no more of these eighteen hundred persons than 1270

In twenty years no more than 830
In thirty years 480
In forty years 230
In fifty years 70

Thus my brethren, you perceive that society is in one continual fluctuation."

Yes, I shall be able, without doubt, to comprehend this scale of mortality, while ascertaining the combination of Saurin at leisure, in a book, wherein I can trace them at sight: but how shall I lay hold of these arithmetical deductions in a pulpit, where the rapidity of the delivery admits of no abstract mental operations?

This singular calculation ought not, therefore, to find room in a sermon, solely intended to be preached in a church.

Beside, the strength which this reasoning appears to have at first sight is not sufficiently forcible to intimidate hardened sinners. Saurin acknowledges, that fifty years after the day wherein he speaks, there will still remain upon the earth seventy of his hearers: now, however little we may know of the human heart, we apprehend that there was not, perhaps, one individual of these eighteen hundred persons, who did not flatter himself with being of this

age admitted of any long acquaintance with him; and the interval between the time of our death and that of our resurrection to be nothing at all, because not perceived by us, it is in effect only fourteen, or about twenty years, that we expect to be separated from him; and in this life we often pass more time without seeing those whom we most respect." (*Priestley's Sermons*, p. 27.)

small number, and, consequently, who did not regard death as still at too great a distance to hasten his conversion.

SECTION XLVI.

OF ENGLISH ELOQUENCE.

INFERIOR as Saurin is to our great masters, he is in the same proportion superior to English preachers.

Mr. Hume expressly acknowledges, (*Treatise upon Eloquence*, chap. vii,) that England hath made less improvement in this kind of eloquence, than in the other branches of literature. In fact, although this nation hath produced some eloquent writers, at the head of whom we ought to reckon the immortal Richardson;* she hath not,

* "The most moral of all our novel writers is Richardson; a writer of excellent intentions, and of very considerable capacity and genius." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p 309.)

"Richardson, beside being a great genius, was a truly good man in all respects. He was pious, virtuous, exemplary, benevolent, friendly, generous, and humane to an uncommon degree; glad of every opportunity of doing good offices to his fellow creatures in distress, and relieving many without their knowledge. His chief delight was doing good. His three great works were entitled 'Pamela, or Virtue rewarded;' 'The History of Clarissa Harlowe;' and 'The History of Sir Charles Grandison.' Dr. Johnson styles him 'an author from whom the age has received great favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.' Mr. Sherlock, the traveller, observes that 'Richardson is admirable for every species of delicacy; for delicacy of wit, sentiment, language, action, every thing. His genius was immense. His views were grand. His soul was noble, and his heart was excellent. He formed a plan that embraced all human nature. His object was to benefit mankind. His knowledge of the world showed him that happiness was to be attained by man, only in proportion as he practised virtue.'

Mr. Richardson's reputation is far from being confined to his own country. He has been read in many of the languages, and known to most of the nations in Europe, and has been greatly admired, not-

as yet, one single orator who can do honour to his country in Europe.*

withstanding every dissimilitude of manners, or even disadvantage of translation. "I consider him," says Dr. Young, "as a truly great natural genius; as great and supereminent in his way, as was Shakspeare and Milton in theirs." (*New Biog. Dict.* See *Appendix.*)

* Mr. Hume, in his Essays, (to which M. Maury probably refers) remarks, that "if our nation be superior to the ancients in philosophy, we are still, notwithstanding all our refinements, much inferior in eloquence. In ancient times, no work of genius was thought to require so great parts and capacity as the speaking in public; and some eminent writers have pronounced the talents, even of a great poet, or philosopher, to be of an inferior nature to those requisite for such an undertaking. Greece and Rome produced each of them but one accomplished orator; and whatever praises the other celebrated speakers might merit, they were still esteemed much inferior to these great models of eloquence.

"Of all the polite and learned nations, Britain alone possesses a popular government, or admits into the legislature such numerous assemblies as can be supposed to lie under the dominion of eloquence. But what has Britain to boast in this particular?

"In enumerating the great men who have done honour to our country, we exult in our poets and philosophers; but what orators are ever mentioned? or where are the monuments of their genius to be met with? There are found, indeed, in our history, the names of several who directed the resolutions of our parliament; but neither themselves nor others have taken the pains to preserve their speeches: and the authority which they possessed seems to have been owing to their experience, wisdom, or power, more than to their talents for oratory. At present, [Mr. Hume first published his Essays about the year 1742] there are above half a dozen speakers in the two houses, who, in the judgment of the public, have reached very near the same pitch of eloquence; and no one pretends to give any one the preference to the rest. This seems to me a certain proof that none of them have attained much beyond a mediocrity in their art, and that the species of eloquence which they aspire to, gives no exercise to the sublimer faculties of the mind, but may be reached by ordinary talents, and a slight application. A hundred cabinet makers in London can work a table, or a chair, equally well; but no one poet can write verses with such spirit and elegance as Mr. Pope." (*Hume's Essays*, vol. i, Essay xii, p. 110–120.)

In a similar strain with the foregoing remarks, the judicious and

In this celebrated island, we sometimes discover among its inhabitants rhetorical strokes; but they know not the

acute Mr. Knox animadverts on the present state of parliamentary eloquence, when, speaking first of the upper house, he says, that "it would be difficult to name a single peer who has attracted notice or admiration for the classical elegance of his matter or his language. Of all the speeches spoken in the house, how few have ever been collected and preserved in libraries, as models of classical elegance? Passion and personal animosity have, indeed, produced many invectives, which gratify the spleen of party, and are for the time extolled beyond all the productions of preceding ingenuity. But is there extant a single volume of speeches, by the most famous among the orators of the upper house, which can be produced as a classical book, or stand in competition with the orations of Cicero? I regret that the fury of party, and the meanness of servitude, have, for the most part, excluded that true taste, true grace, and true spirit, which is necessary to form a classical orator, from the harangues of an assembly, which may be deemed the most august in Europe.

"The house of commons has always been esteemed a very distinguished theatre of modern eloquence. And there indeed, notwithstanding the same impediments which prevail among the peers, it is easy to produce many splendid examples. But, though we join in the applause of common fame, yet let us ask, Where are to be found the volumes of oratorical elegance? Have the speeches which have gained the praise of admiring kingdoms, been no where collected and recorded? Do we lock them up in our book cases, and put them into the hands of our children as models for imitation, as lessons to form their young minds, and raise a succession of orators and patriots? No; the speeches are celebrated at first, and while they answer a temporary purpose, they are like vegetables of the night, or insects of a day. They have seldom that solidity of merit which can render the ore valuable when the samp is effaced, and the occasion of it almost forgotten and quite disregarded; which can preserve the plate still saleable after the fashion is antiquidated." (*Knox's Essays*, No. 152.)

Dr. Blair joins in the same general observation:—"It seems surprising that Great Britain should not have made a more conspicuous figure in eloquence than it has hitherto attained; when we consider the enlightened, and the free and bold genius of the country. It must be confessed, that in most parts of eloquence, we are undoubtedly inferior, not only to the Greeks and Romans, by many degrees, but also to the French. We have philosophers, historians,

art, properly so called, of eloquence; and it would even seem, that they do not consider it of much value.

and poets of the greatest name; but of orators or public speakers, how little have we to boast? And where are the monuments of their genius to be found?" (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 38, 39.)

From the unpromising aspect of British eloquence, according to the statement of such able writers, a motive may be adduced to the young public speaker to signalize himself by successful exertions in oratory, since the field lies so open before him, and has hitherto been so seldom trodden.

"In the house of commons, it is easy," says Mr. Knox, "to produce many splendid examples of modern eloquence." Supported by such an authority, the translator feels rather disposed to demur at the unqualified condemnation of M. Maury, when he says, "that Great Britain hath not as yet one single orator who can do honour to his country in Europe."

The eloquence of the late earl of Chatham hath left an indelible impression on the minds of many who still exist, and will doubtless remain for ages, a glorious monument of the triumph of this art. "Nations shook at the thunder of his voice. Language can scarcely supply terms to express the weight of his authority, the magnitude of his mind and his character, and the efficacy with which he thought, decided, spoke, and acted."

It is, indeed, a subject of regret, that the speeches of this great man, and of other eminent orators, have not been more carefully preserved as models for youth, as well as for the instruction of posterity at large. Some information on this subject may, however, be obtained from a late publication, entitled, *Anecdotes of the Life of the earl of Chatham, including his speeches*, in 2 vols. 4to.

In the present day, the names of such public speakers as those of Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, and Burke, stand pre-eminent. Of Mr. Burke it may be remarked, that perhaps there are few, if any, members of parliament, whose printed speeches will bear a comparison with that which this orator addressed to the people of Bristol, on the occasion of a general election. We find in it that beautiful panegyric of the late Mr. Howard, referred to p. 69. The conclusion of this celebrated speech has been much admired, when he said, "And now, gentlemen, on this serious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you; let me take to myself some degree of honest pride on the nature of the charges brought against me. I do not here stand accused of venality, or neglect of duty. It is not said, that, in the long period of my service, I have, in a single instance, sac-

A studied discourse would not be listened to in parliament, where weighty discussions only are expected, without the artifice of a premeditated style. You will discover much more of the remains of Roman eloquence in the diets of Poland than in the debates of Westminster.

Sublime ideas are uttered by every man whose mind is warmed; but it is a progressive method, it is a well

rificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged, that, to gratify any anger or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any one man of any description. No; the charges against me are all of one kind, that I have pushed the general principles of general justice and benevolence too far; farther than a cautious policy would warrant, and farther than the opinions of many would go with me. In every accident which may happen through life; in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress, I will think of this accusation and be comforted."

But perhaps, though the last, yet not the least of these several orators, of whom our nation may be proud, may be ranked the venerable Earl Mansfield, now, like the setting sun, ready to disappear from our view.

His eloquence as a pleader, his uprightness as a judge, his conduct as a man, and as a peer, will embalm his memory to the latest posterity.

Upon this great character, Dr. Fordyce passes this just eulogium:— "Lord Mansfield joins to the most engaging manner of speaking, the art of presenting his subject in a light and language so clear and flowing, and at the same time so striking and spirited, that if his eloquence or pleadings have not produced effects equal to those recorded of Cicero or Demosthenes, it may be accounted for by reflecting on the circumstances of the different ages in which they lived. He is so filled with his subject that he seems often to be at a loss to determine which of his ideas ought to be preferred, and which omitted in his pleadings. None of the masters of eloquence that we know or read of possessed this peculiar talent but Demosthenes." (*Fordyce on the Action proper for the Pulpit.*)

Whoever wishes to see a specimen of his parliamentary speeches may read with pleasure that excellent one he delivered on occasion of the appeal of the city of London against Mr. Evans for refusing to fine for the office of sheriff, in which the rights of conscience and of religious toleration and liberty are ably vindicated. It is to be found in *Dr. Furneaux's Letters to Judge Blackstone*, 2d edit.

supported elocution, it is a sound judgment, it is an excellent and varied diction; in fine, it is the perfection of language united to the sublimity of thought, which distinguishes eloquence.

The Boor of the Danube as hath been already remarked by many critics, ought not to be reckoned among orators, although his conversation may be cited as a pattern of energy and vehemence.

There is nothing of this sort, which may be denominated the eloquence of a stroke, more worthy of admiration than the answer of the fugitive Marius when a lictor came to command him, by the authority of the Roman prætor, to depart from Africa. This great man, fired with indignation to find himself ungratefully treated in adversity by a magistrate who abused his authority, said to the slave who made known to him this cruel order, "Go, tell thy master that thou hast seen Caius Marius banished from his country, and sitting upon the ruins of Carthage;" "as if," says the Abbé Vertot, "by the comparison of his personal disgraces with the fall of the powerful Carthagenian empire, Marius had intended to teach the Roman prætor the instability of the highest condition."*

The English can boast of some strokes of this kind, although far inferior to the answer of Marius.

When the parliament of Great Britain intended to pass a bill, which denied to persons accused on a criminal account the privilege of defending themselves by the help of council, Lord Bollingbroke, who was against this intended law, attempted to oppose it; but intimidated by the assembly before which he was speaking, he could not articulate a syllable, and the words he attempted to utter were at every breath dying away on his lips, when making an extraordinary effort, he cried out, "You wish, gentlemen, that the accused should appear before you in order

* *Vertot's Revolutions of Rome*, liv. 10. See also *Univ. Hist.* vol. xiii, p. 56.

to defend themselves. If your presence hath imposed silence upon me, judge of the impression which it would produce upon the unfortunate, who should behold in you judges ready to send them to the scaffold." This single reflection, unquestionably more eloquent than all the arguments which Lord Bollingbroke could have alleged, caused the rejection of this new design.

Mr. Charles Fox, who is in the present day considered as the most eloquent man of Great Britain, pronounced in parliament the eulogium of the late General Montgomery: one of the court party interrupted him in these words: "How dare you praise a rebel before the representatives of the nation?" "I will not refrain," Mr. Fox immediately replied, "from repelling the outrage done to the memory of a great man. You all know the meaning of the word *rebel* in the mouth of my adversaries. If you have any doubts of the true sense of this expression, I would entreat you to recollect, that it is to these pretended rebellions we owe our present constitution, and the privilege of being assembled at Westminster to deliberate upon the interests of our country."*

* The late celebrated Irish parliamentary orator, Mr. Flood, is said to have rendered himself, at times, distinguished for such sort of oratorical strokes as those which the Abbé Maury here ascribes to Bollingbroke and Mr. Fox; and also for ingenious and sentimental expressions.

As a specimen of the latter sort, it is recorded, that, at the commencement of the American war, having indulged himself in one of those prophecies, which experience has since proved to be so erroneous, relative to the ruin of this country by the loss of America, Mr. Flood said, "Destruction shall come upon the British empire like the coldness of death; it shall creep upon it from the extreme parts:" and in speaking of the conduct of Lord Chatham upon the stamp act, and alluding to a passage in Thucydides, he introduced the following beautiful episode:—"Illustrious man! to whose tomb posterity shall come and say, as Pericles did over the bodies of his deceased fellow soldiers, You are like to the divinities above us; you are no longer with us, you are known only by the benefits which

These are specimens which would be no discredit to the writings of Demosthenes. But a sublime idea does not constitute a discourse; a beautiful detached passage does not compose the art of eloquence.

Even until the present period the value of English orators is restrained within narrow bounds. Famous Islanders! "It is not genius, it is the genius of oratory that you want," may we say to you, as Cicero did formerly to some of his cotemporaries.*

The human mind owes an unceasing debt of gratitude for your sublime discoveries on light, on gravitation, on electricity, on the aberration of the stars; but let not your pride be wounded if we contest the pre-eminence with your orators. Eloquence, the usual companion of liberty, is a stranger in your country. Do not affect a false and barbarous contempt of gifts, which nature hath denied you. Turn your attention to the models of antiquity, and to the examples of Greece and Rome. Add to the glory of the good actions, which are so common in your country, the merit perhaps no less honourable, of knowing how to celebrate them.

you have conferred." Such an enlivening stroke deserves to be rescued from oblivion.

In Boswell's Life of the celebrated Dr. Johnson there is a remark inserted in relation to the written Life of Young, which may be quoted as one of those strokes of energetic and prompt eloquence which M. Maury acknowledges the English possess.

"The Life of Dr. Young," (in Johnson's Lives of the Poets,) "was written," says Mr. Boswell, "by Mr. Croft, and displays a pretty successful imitation of Johnson's style. A certain very eminent literary character opposed this idea vehemently; exclaiming, 'No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp, without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength.' This was an image so happy that one might have thought he would have been satisfied with it; but he was not: and setting his mind again to work he added with great felicity, 'It has all the contortions of the Sybil, without the inspiration.'" (*Boswell's Life of Johnson*, vol. ii, p. 361, 4to.)

* Illis non ingenium, sed Oratorium ingenium deficit. (*Brutus*, 110.)

I mean to set bounds to myself in this discussion. I shall not speak of the discourses of Boyle,* which are entirely argumentative dissertations. I shall not detain myself with the sermons of Clarke;† they are written

* Sermons preached by different able divines at the lecture founded by the Hon. Boyle.

Concerning these, Mr. Knox observes, that "they are among the best argued in our language. They have been the laboured productions of the most ingenious men. But the whole collection never did so much as a single practical discourse of Tillotson." (*Knox's Essays*, No. 168.)

† "The sagacious Clarke pretended not to wit. He affected not the ambitious ornaments of rhetoric. He rarely reaches the sublime, or aims at the pathetic; but in a clear, manly, flowing style, he delivers the most important doctrines, confirmed on every occasion by well applied passages from Scripture. If he was not a shining orator, according to the ideas of rhetoricians, he was a very agreeable as well as useful preacher. He was not perfectly orthodox in his opinions; a circumstance which has lowered his character among many. Certain it is, that he would have done more good had he confined his labours to practical divinity." (*Ibid.*)

The following is the character of this divine, which was given in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—"Samuel Clarke, D. D., rector of St. James', Westminster: in each several part of useful knowledge and critical learning, perhaps without a superior; in all united, certainly without an equal; in his works, the best defender of religion; in his practice, the greatest ornament to it; in his conversation, communicative, and in an uncommon manner instructive; in his preaching and writing, strong, clear, and calm; in his life, high in the esteem of the wise, the good, and the great; in his death, lamented by every friend to learning, truth, and virtue."

Dr. Clarke's principal sermons were those preached at Boyle's lecture on "The Being and Attributes of God," and "The Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion;" beside which, there are published many other sermons of his preached on particular occasions. Dr. Clarke was born 1673, died 1729.

Dr. Blair's character of this divine is as follows:—"Dr. Clarke every where abounds in good sense, and the most clear and accurate reasoning; his applications of Scripture are pertinent; his style is always perspicuous, and often elegant; he instructs, and he convinces; in what then is he deficient? In nothing, except in the power of interesting and seizing the heart. He shows you what you ought

with such metaphysical abstraction that it is difficult to comprehend, in the retirement of the closet, the discourses of this well known rector of St. James'.

SECTION XLVII.

OF TILLOTSON.

THE eloquence of Tillotsón, archbishop of Canterbury, is highly esteemed. I have read his sermons with the strictest impartiality, and these are my sentiments of the works of this prelate, who is universally regarded as the first orator of England:—

Tillotson is an excellent writer. His principal merit consists in the style. He must, therefore, be much injured by a translation, in which the vernacular expression is lost, and especially by such a translator as Barbeyrac, who was always deficient in sublimity, in embellishment, in energy, and in elegance. But while we acknowledge all the faults of this French version, the subject matter of the archbishop of Canterbury's sermons still remains far inferior to the discourses of Massillon and Bourdaloue.*

Tillotson is more of a theologian than a moralist. He scarcely ever discussed any other than controversial subjects. He employs the same dull modes of syllogism or dissertation; and merely habituates himself to an insipid uniformity of method.

I discover in his discourses no rhetorical movements,

to do; but excites not the desire of doing it; he treats man as if he were a being of pure intellect, without imagination or passions." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 223.)

* From this acknowledgment of M. Maury, that his ideas of Tillotson's sermons are derived from the imperfect French version of Barbeyrac, it would seem that he himself has but little acquaintance with the English language; if so, it must be presumed that he is not a competent judge of English writers; and that, therefore, the indiscriminate censures which he passes upon our English divines, must, in a great measure, be ascribed to his own ignorance of their works, and the language in which they are written.

no great ideas, no sublime strokes: he generally divides every paragraph, and has thirty or forty subdivisions in each of his sermons. His particulars are insipid, futile, and often devoid of excellence. In short, Tillotson is so much a stranger to the art of eloquence that he scarcely ever makes an exordium or a peroration. Is this then the orator whom they are bold enough to put in competition with our French preachers?*

But, not to confine ourselves to indefinite criticism, let us hasten to substantiate the grounds of our opinion.

In his sermon on "Prejudices against Religion," Tillotson starts an objection, drawn from the opposition which man finds between his duty and his inclinations. (Vol. iv, p. 35.) This objection he copies from the tragedy of Mustapha, by Fulke, Lord Brooke, from which he recites in the pulpit a series of verses. Is a quotation of this sort worthy of the majesty of a church?† "The passions," he adds, "are a kind of glue, fastening us to things low and

* Maury had no good reason whatever to bring Archbishop Tillotson forward as the person generally esteemed the first orator among English divines. For soundness and strength of argument few of his own country have exceeded, and none of the French divines have equalled, the celebrated and worthy archbishop. His warmest admirers have never esteemed him as a first rate orator, but have agreed with the general opinion in placing him in rather an inferior situation of that class. He is, however, a great favourite among his countrymen, who attend so much to the *sapere* from the pulpit as to neglect the *fari* to a faulty degree. Let it be recollected that he has been the most powerful, the unanswerable opponent of the Romish Church, and that Maury has indulged himself in attacking the Protestant Church on the weakest side of its most formidable champion, while he has affected to overlook many others less obnoxious, whose claim to oratory he dared not to controvert.

† Maury has thought it inexpedient to recollect that some of the writers of the Holy Scripture, that Arnobius, Lactantius, and the generality of the ancient fathers, and the most learned writers in every age of the Church, have embellished their composition, supported their arguments, and elucidated their observations, by quotations from classic authors of every description, from tragedians and

terrestrial.* (Vol. i, p. 168.) Scarcely can one pass in the streets, I speak of it from experience, without having his ears assailed with such horrible oaths and imprecations as would be sufficient to ruin a nation, were it guilty of no other crime: and they are not merely servants who break out into such blasphemous conversation; it proceeds also from the mouth of their masters."† (Vol. i, p. 173.)

Elsewhere, in order to prove that the mysteries of religion ought to be believed, although we can never

comedians, as well as poets, historians, and philosophers. To adduce no more instances, has not St. Paul, in his very sublime argument on the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv, 33, made a quotation from the comic Menander, "Evil communications corrupt good manners?" Has he not, in his Epistle to Titus i, 12, quoted from Epimenides, "The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies?" Has not St. Luke, in his memoirs of the Acts of the Apostles, xvii, 28, informed us that St. Paul made a quotation, which was from Aratus, "For we are also his offspring?" And has not St. Peter, 2d Epistle ii, 22, quoted two proverbs, which the learned generally suppose to have been from some comic writer whose works are lost, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire?" Did not Maury recollect these, and many others; or had rancour benumbed his faculties, and obliterated every impression of memory; or did prejudice warp him, with his eyes open, from the region of truth?

* Tillotson's expressions are, "The lusts and passions of men do sully and darken their minds, even by a natural influence. Intemperance, and sensuality, and fleshly lusts, debase men's minds, and clog their spirits, make them gross and foul, listless and inactive; they sink us down into sense, and glue us to these low and inferior things; like bird lime, they hamper and entangle our souls, and hinder our flight upward; they indispose and unfit our minds for the most noble and intellectual considerations." (*Tillotson*, vol. i, Serm. 4, 7th ed. 8vo. p. 153.)

† Tillotson's words in the English edition are, "I speak it knowingly, a man can hardly pass the streets without having his ears grated and pierced with such horrid and blasphemous oaths and curses as are enough, if we were guilty of no other sin, to sink a nation; and this not only from the tribe that wear liveries, but from those that go before them, and should give better example." (Vol. i, Serm. 3, p. 148.)

comprehend them with mathematical evidence, Tillotson expresses himself in this manner:—"We eat, we drink, every day, although, in my opinion, no one can demonstrate that his baker, his brewer, or his cook, have not put poison into the bread, the beer, or the meat."*

In this manner did Tillotson perform the ministry of the word in the age of Dryden, Addison, Waller, Milton; and before that same Charles II. who had heard in his childhood the most illustrious French orators.†

* Vol. i, p. 112; or, in the English edition, thus:—"Nay, which is more, men every day eat and drink, though I think no man can demonstrate out of Euclid or Apollonius, that his baker, or brewer, or cook, have not conveyed poison into his meat or drink." (Vol. i, Serm. 1, p. 86.)

† Archbishop Tillotson's character as an orator must be acknowledged to be somewhat problematical. The extravagant eulogiums of those who have extolled him as a pattern of excellence, and the first orator of England, have, perhaps, whetted the edge of our author's severe censures on his performances.

Tillotson, as a writer, had considerable merit; but he was not without his faults. His style is so deficient in accuracy and elegance, that it will not, in the present day of refinement, permit him to be held up as a model for imitation. At the same time, M. Maury appears to be as much prejudiced against this English Protestant writer, as he is unreasonably partial to those of his own nation and communion.

An acute and polite writer of our own country refuses to Tillotson the character of an illustrious orator, and thinks that no man had ever less pretensions to genuine oratory than this celebrated preacher. "One cannot but regret," says he, "that Dr. Tillotson, who abounds with such noble and generous sentiments, should want the art of setting them off with all the advantage they deserve; that the sublime in morals should not be attended with a suitable elevation of language. The truth, however, is, his words are frequently ill-chosen, and almost always ill-placed; his periods are both tedious and unharmonious; as his metaphors are generally mean, and often ridiculous; a fault which seems to be chiefly owing to his having had no sort of notion of rhetorical numbers. A noble simplicity at the same time runs through his discourses." (*Fitzosborne's Letters*, Let. xiv.)

The learned Dr. Doddridge, in his "Character of English Divines,"

O Louis XIV! What wouldst thou have thought, if the ministers of the altar had addressed such language to thee in the midst of thy court! What would have been thy surprise, if thine ear, accustomed to the dignified accents of Bossuet, to the elevated and energetic tone of Bourdaloue, to the insinuating melody of Massillon, had been assailed with this gross and barbarous elocution? With what indignation wouldst not thou have blushed for thy

(in MS.) makes the following concise remarks on Tillotson:—"Some pertinent expressions; method admirably clear, beyond almost any other man. Many sermons contain nothing remarkable, particularly in his posthumous works; yet some there are equal to any formerly published. His best pieces are those at the beginning of the first and second volumes; such are those 'on evil speaking,' and 'forgiving our enemies.' He made great use of Barrow and Wilkins, with whom compare some few of his sermons. No man ever found such lucky arguments, nor represented the adversary's sentiments more artfully for confutation."

Dr. Blair's sentiments of Tillotson are thus expressed:—"Tillotson has long been admired as an eloquent writer, and a model for preaching. But his eloquence, if we can call it such, has been often misunderstood. For, if we include in the idea of eloquence, vehemence and strength, picturesque description, glowing figures, or correct arrangement of sentences, in all these parts of oratory the archbishop is exceedingly deficient. His style is always pure, indeed, and perspicuous, but careless and remiss, too often feeble and languid; little beauty in the construction of his sentences, which are frequently suffered to drag unharmoniously; seldom any attempt toward strength and sublimity. But, notwithstanding these defects, such a constant vein of good sense and piety runs through his works, such an earnest and serious manner, and so much useful instruction conveyed in a style so pure, natural, and unaffected, as will justly recommend him to high regard, as long as the English language remains; not, indeed, as a model of the highest eloquence, but as a simple and amiable writer, whose manner is strongly expressive of great goodness and worth. As appears in the archbishop, negligence may sometimes be carried so far as to impair the beauty of simplicity, and make it border on a flat and languid manner." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. i, pp. 393, 394.)

Tillotson was born 1630, died 1694. (*Vid. Birch's Life of Tillotson*, prefixed to his works.)

country? But thou hadst the skill of imparting to all the arts the dignity of thy character; under thy happy auspices all the various kinds advanced toward perfection. Thou broughtest forth to view orators worthy of speaking in the name of the Eternal, and never shall the eloquence of thine age be surpassed!

Tillotson writes with as little moderation as dignity. In every page of his discourses we perceive the fanaticism of a Protestant, who is solicitous to please the populace.

Toward the conclusion of his sermon "on the love of our neighbour," he makes a sort of recapitulation, with a view to apply the moral of his subject to the Church of Rome. Who would not suppose that a subject so affecting, would inspire him with tender, and even generous sentiments? Observe, however, the consequence he draws, after having largely proved the necessity of loving all men:—"Whenever we speak of charity, and of the obligation of loving one another, we cannot avoid thinking of the Church of Rome; but she must recur to our minds, particularly at this time, when she hath made so fresh a discovery, and in a manner so well authenticated, of the regard she hath for us, by the merciful plot contrived against us, (the pretended plot of 1678,) such a plot as may make the ears of all who hear it related to tingle, render popery an eternal disgrace, and cause it to be regarded with horror and execration even to the end of the world."* (Vol. iii, p. 53.) What style! what sentiments! what candour! what logic!†

* In the English edition thus:—"We cannot choose but think of the Church of Rome, whenever we speak of charity, and loving one another; especially having had so late a discovery of their affection to us, and so considerable a testimony of the kindness and charity which they designed toward us; such as may justly make the ears of all that hear it to tingle, and render popery execrable and infamous, a frightful and a hateful thing to the end of the world." (Vol. iii, sermon 2, p. 54.)

† Every candid and considerate mind should make all due allow-

Let none however suppose, that by adopting a method too familiar for critics, I am searching after some careless passages in the archbishop of Canterbury's sermons, in order to pass sentence upon him only for his faults. I have read the whole collection of his discourses. I have extracted thence many quotations of the same kind; and it would cost me no more than the trouble of transcribing them, were I not afraid of fatiguing the reader, and if the examples which I have adduced were not sufficient to determine his judgment.

SECTION XLVIII.

OF BARROW, YOUNG, MADDOX, &c.—STATE OF PULPIT ELOQUENCE AMONG THE ENGLISH.

I SHOULD have too many advantages if I were to investigate the merit of the sermons of Barrow,* another orator

ance for the power of prejudice, and the force of education. Attending to this, we need not be surprised at the warmth with which M. Maury, that zealous advocate for the Church of Rome, exclaims against Tillotson as a fanatical Protestant.

It were to be wished that the abbe had possessed sufficient candour for Tillotson to recollect the time when he lived, and the history of that time. During the greater part of the reign of Charles the Second, and his successor James, the nation was kept in a constant alarm through the machination of popish emissaries, and the dread of a popish king. Is it then to be wondered at, if the minds of the contending parties were embittered against each other? and if plots, real or pretended, were made the occasion of mutual recriminations?

At this distance of time, and after calm and unbiassed reflection on the events of Charles the Second's reign, we shall feel much more disposed to acquit the Catholics of some of those plots laid to their charge, and particularly that of 1678, on occasion of which Lord Stafford suffered, than at the time, and in the violence of party animosity, it was almost impossible to have done.

* Dr. Doddridge's character of Barrow is as follows:—"He was the most laconic writer among our old divines. His works contain an amazing number of thoughts, not always well digested, or plainly

whom the English esteem and praise, although, by their own acknowledgment, he be far inferior to Tillotson.

I am not acquainted with the sermons of Young, in which we should, doubtless, discover that plaintive poetry, that depth of sentiment, and even those eccentric ideas, which the pensive pastor of Welwyn collected together in his nocturnal meditations. But Young does not appear to me to have had an imagination sufficiently pliable and versatile for the eloquence of the pulpit.

The preachers of Charles II., who happened to hear Bourdaloue at Paris, have but faintly imitated him; and even now, when his sermons are spread through the whole of Europe, the revolution which they ought to produce in Christian eloquence hath not as yet taken place among the English.*

expressed, yet sometimes excellent: he attempted to introduce some new words, which, not succeeding, appear odd. There are many useful scriptures, and fine quotations from the classics and fathers, in the margin. Nothing can be more elaborate. Most of his sermons were transcribed three times, some much oftener. Many of Tillotson's finest sermons are abridgments and quotations from him, particularly that 'of evil speaking.' The first volume of Barrow's sermons contain the best." (*Doddridge's Characters, MS.*)

"Barrow, a mighty genius, whose ardour was capable of accomplishing all it undertook. The tide of his eloquence flows with smooth, yet irresistible rapidity. He treats his subject almost with mathematical precision, and never leaves it till he has exhausted it. It has been said, that a late most popular orator of the house of lords asserted, that he owed much of the fire of his eloquence to the study of Barrow." (*Knox's Essays*, No. 168.)

Dr. Blair says, "Barrow's style has many faults. It is unequal, incorrect, and redundant; but withal, for force and expressiveness, uncommonly distinguished. On every subject he multiplies words with an overflowing copiousness; but it is always a torrent of strong ideas and significant expressions which he pours forth." (*Blair's Lectures*, 4to. vol. i, p. 376.)

Barrow was born 1630, died 1677. (*Vid. Hill's Life of Barrow.*)

* "The English preachers," says a very sensible writer, "are, it is certain, more distinguished by their justness of sentiment and strength of reasoning than by their oratorial powers, or talents of affecting the

passions. More solicitous to convince than persuade, they choose to employ their abilities in endeavouring to impress the mind with a sense of the truths they deliver, by the force of argumentation, instead of rousing the affections by the energy of their eloquence. We meet with no examples in their writings of those strokes of passion which penetrate and cleave the heart at once, or of that rapid overpowering eloquence, which carries every thing before it like a torrent. They seem to have considered mankind in the same light in which Voltaire regarded the celebrated Dr. Clarke, as mere reasoning machines; they seem to have considered them as purely intellectual, void of passion and sensibility. This strange mistake may, perhaps, be supposed to be partly the effect of the philosophical spirit of the times, which, like all other prevailing modes, is subject to its deliriums; certain, however, it is, that while man remains a compound being, consisting of reason and passion, his actions will always be prompted by the latter, in whatever degree his opinions may be influenced by the former." (*Duff's Essay on Genius*, b. ii, sec. 4, pp. 238, 245.)

"The French and English writers of sermons proceed upon very different ideas of the eloquence of the pulpit; and seem indeed to have split it between them. A French sermon is, for the most part, a warm, animated exhortation; an English one is a piece of cool, instructive reasoning. The French preachers address themselves chiefly to the imagination and the passions; the English, almost solely to the understanding. It is the union of these two kinds of composition, of the French earnestness and warmth, with the English accuracy and reason, that would form, according to my idea, the model of a perfect sermon." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 119.)

"In the pulpit," says Dr. Blair, "the British divines have distinguished themselves by the most accurate and rational compositions, which perhaps any nation can boast of. Many printed sermons we have, full of good sense and of sound divinity and morality; but the eloquence to be found in them, the power of persuasion, of interesting and engaging the heart, which is, or ought to be, the great object of the pulpit, is far from bearing a suitable proportion to the excellence of the matter. There are few arts, in my opinion, farther from perfection than that of preaching is among us. In proof of the fact it is sufficient to observe, that an English sermon, instead of being a persuasive, animated oration, seldom rises beyond the strain of correct and dry reasoning: whereas in the sermons of Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Flechier, among the French, we see a much higher species of eloquence aimed at, and in a great measure attained, than the British preachers have in view. The French have adopted higher ideas both of pleasing and persuading by means of oratory, though

sometimes in the execution they fail. In Great Britain, we have taken up eloquence on a lower key; but in our execution have been more correct. In France, the style of their orators is ornamented with bolder figures; and their discourse carried on with more amplification, more warmth and elevation. The composition is often very beautiful; but sometimes also too diffuse, and deficient in that strength and cogency which render eloquence powerful.

Modern eloquence is much more cool and temperate than the Grecian and Roman; and in Great Britain especially, has confined itself almost wholly to the argumentative and rational. It is much of that species which the ancient critics called the 'Tenuis,' or 'Subtilis;' which aims at convincing and instructing, rather than affecting the passions, and assumes a tone not much higher than common argument and discourse." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 39–41.)

Still, however, though much remains to be accomplished in our island in the art of pulpit elocution, it must be confessed that we are by no means deficient in theological discourses, which would reflect honour on any country, or in compositions, which will bear to undergo the ordeal of a correct attic taste. And it appears to be a well founded, as it is a pleasing reflection, that our pulpit compositions have been, for some length of time, in an improving style. The divines of the last century wanted, it is true, that accuracy and refinement of taste which characterize some of our modern discourses; but some of them abounded in lofty sentiments and unquestionable energy. The works of Jeremiah Taylor, Hopkins, Howe, Bates, and others, have in them traits of genuine eloquence. In times somewhat later, we can boast of the sermons of Seed, Atterbury, Hoadley, Sherlock, Secker, Butler, Doddridge, Watts, and others; and in the present day the names of Porteus, Davis, Gerrard, Ogilvie, Leechman, Blair, Fordyce, Hunter, and many others, might perhaps be adduced as no bad specimens of the height to which the eloquence of the pulpit hath been advanced. As to preachers, perhaps none have acquired, by their natural eloquence, greater command over their hearers than the celebrated Messrs. Whitefield and Wesley; to the former of these the description and character given by M. Maury to Bridaine, (p. 59) bears, in various respects, a considerable resemblance.

The reader is farther referred to some ingenious and judicious remarks on the late and present state of the eloquence of the pulpit and sermon writers, in *Knox's Essays*, vol. ii, No. 164, and 168, and in *Duff's Essay on Genius*, pp. 234–244.

The bishop of Worcester,* in 1752, preached a sermon on "Inoculation for the Small Pox," which hath been frequently printed at London, and since translated into French.

It is asserted that this discourse influenced the public benevolence to endow a hospital for inoculation.

If indeed the bishop of Worcester hath participated this kind of glory with Vincent de Paul, it must be acknowledged that eloquence could not obtain a more excellent triumph. This sermon is an interesting dissertation, and new as to its object; but the prelate who delivered it will never be placed in the rank of orators.

Destitute of imagination, and of sensibility, he wanders into abstract calculations respecting population; into low details about the secondary fever; and after having exhausted all those combinations, certainly more suited to a medicinal school than a Christian assembly, he quotes the testimonies and authority of Messrs. Ranby, Hawkins, and Middleton, surgeons of London, of whom he speaks with as much veneration as if they were fathers of the Church.

The more we read foreign orators the more we perceive the pre-eminence of the French preachers.

The Spaniards and Germans are yet in the rudiments of Christian eloquence. Father Seignery has been for some time extolled as the Bourdaloue of Italy. He hath been translated. His most zealous partisans have given him up. How indeed can we admire ridiculous passages

* The bishop of Worcester, referred to by our author, was Dr. Maddox.

"He was an excellent preacher, and a great promoter of public charities, particularly the Worcester infirmary, and the hospital for inoculating the small pox, at London. His sermon in favour of this latter institution, preached in 1752, was much admired, and contributed greatly to extend the practice of inoculation. He published some other single sermons. Born about the year 1696, died in 1759. (*Encyclopædia Britannica.*)

and popular fables, which we should scarcely tolerate in instructions to country villagers?

SECTION XLIX.

OF M. THOMAS, AND THE REVOLUTION WHICH HE EFFECTED IN THE STYLE OF RHETORICAL COMPOSITION.

NOTWITHSTANDING the superiority of the models which the age of Louis XIV. hath furnished, as well as the distinguished talents of many writers who devoted themselves to the ministry of the Gospel, eloquence seemed to be buried in the tomb with Massillon.

Most of the preachers who succeeded him were desirous of opening to themselves a new road, where they had at first brilliant success, for which they have since severely suffered. They invented an affected and effeminate jargon, and, by dint of labour, they rendered themselves unintelligible. Ah! wherefore did they wish to banish simplicity? Was it because they were ignorant that one of the secrets of rhetorical composition consists in making use of those lively, natural, and varied modes of expression which are adopted in conversation, in addition to such a selection of words as may be always excellent, without ever being far-fetched?*

* The rhetoricians here spoken of, wrote with the most tedious prolixity, and were equally strangers to the precision of thought and diction. We perceive in their discourses pompous expressions, vulgar ideas, and that affectation of wit which is incompatible with eloquence.

"Words are like leaves; and where they most abound,
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay:
But true expression, like th' unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.

A want of genius, however, is not what we can charge upon these corrupters of Christian eloquence, unless we should be of opinion, that owing to their deficiency in this respect, they discovered too strong an affectation of it. They wrote without animation or fire; they confounded the gift of persuasion with the art of dazzling; and after having perverted the taste of the public, they have succeeded in exciting an admiration of their faults.

Eloquence, become a stranger to the works of learned men, was still cultivated by a small number of real orators, whom popular opinion placed far below all those fashionable declaimers. But, in the history of the arts, there are remarkable epochs, when a superior writer recalls the public attention toward those methods which have been abandoned, and draws along with him a number, who follow him in the course in which he himself has excelled.

Such is the glory which M. Thomas hath had among us. He contributed to the fortunate revolution, which has renewed the taste in oratory for panegyrics: in these, he hath displayed as much eloquence as Fontenelle had discovered of penetration.* He inspired the most lively enthusiasm for great men. He improved the mind by the excellence of his sentiments. He directed his discourses to a useful object. He, in a particular manner, promoted

> Expression is the dress of thought, and still
> Appears more decent as more suitable;
> A vile conceit in pompous words express'd,
> Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd:
> For diff'rent styles with diff'rent subjects sort,
> As sev'ral garbs with country, town, and court.
>
> *Pope's Essay on Criticism*, v. 312.

* Fontenelle was a celebrated French author, and pronounced by Voltaire the most universal genius of the age of Louis XIV. He wrote on a variety of subjects, particularly a number of panegyrics on the deceased members of the Academy of Sciences, to which he had been appointed perpetual secretary. See *New and General Biographical Dictionary.*

the utility of his writings by collecting them together, and enriching them with his "Essay on Panegyrics." The works of the eulogist of Marcus Aurelius ought to be ever dear to us by so interesting and unusual a conjunction of erudition, genius, and virtue.

SECTION L.

OF THE USE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

The style that M. Thomas cultivated, possesses much of that manner, so well adapted for the pulpit, by the elevation of the ideas, and the moral strain which is generally to be found in them. Do we wish to see the example of this writer become serviceable to preachers? Let us recollect, that, in the corruption of eloquence, the language of religion was forgotten; and that, in order to impart to our ministry its former lustre, we must, at once, become orators, and Christian orators.

It is by incessantly reading the Holy Scriptures that we learn to speak that spiritual language which diffuses through a sermon representations alternately affecting, majestic, or terrible.

Let us never consider it as a painful restraint, that we are happily bound to incorporate the sacred writings into our compositions. The Bible is for the style of preachers, that which mythology is for the elocution of poets. In the sacred volumes there are to be found thoughts so sublime, expressions so energetic, descriptions so eloquent, allegories so well chosen, sentences so profound, ejaculations so pathetic, sentiments so tender that we should adopt them from taste, if we were so unhappy as not to search after them from a principle of zeal and piety.*

* "Without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images: but it is from the Scriptures

A Christian orator may, and even ought to seize upon all the riches which he discovers in these Divine books.

that he should learn to make powerful impressions. There he may clearly discover the way to make sermons plain and popular, without losing the force and dignity they ought always to have." "The study of the sacred writings was, in the first ages of the Church, reckoned to be sufficient. Hence came that passage in the Apostolical Constitutions, which says, 'If you want history, or laws, or moral precepts, or eloquence, or poetry, you will find them all in the Scriptures.' In effect, it is needless to seek elsewhere for any thing that is necessary to form our taste and judgment of true eloquence. St. Austin says, we ought to exalt and improve our knowledge by the authority of Scripture; and our language, by the dignity of its expressions."

"The difference between them [the best heathen and inspired writings] will, upon comparison, be found much to the honour of Scripture. It surpasses them vastly in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses' songs; especially the last, Deut. xxxii, 1, &c, which all the Israelitish children were to learn by heart. Never did any ode, either Greek or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms: that one in particular, which begins thus:—'The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken,' Psa. l, 1, &c, surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. Neither Homer, nor any other poet, ever equalled Isaiah describing the majesty of God, in whose sight the 'nations of the earth are as the small dust; yea less than nothing, and vanity;' 'seeing it is He that stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in,' ch. xl, 10, &c. Sometimes this prophet has all the sweetness of an eclogue, in the smiling images he gives us of peace; (see ch. xi, and xxxv;) and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. What is there in antiquity that can be compared to the Lamentations of Jeremiah, when he tenderly deplores the miseries of his country? v, 2, &c, ch. ii, and iii; or to the prophecy of Nahum, when he foresees in spirit the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army? i, 3, &c. We fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. Every thing is painted in such a lively manner, as strikes the imagination. The prophet far out-does Homer. Read likewise Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the Divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him; and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of sacred writ. In all the rest of Scripture there appears a

It is there where plagiarism is permitted him, and the more treasures he draws from thence, the better are his auditors pleased with his thefts.

Quotations from inspired authors become authorities, which render the ministry of a Christian orator more venerable ; and witnesses, which he derives from heaven or hell, in order to instruct the earth.

Wo! wo to him, if he be ashamed of the Gospel, at the very time when he is preaching it, and if, from an indecent and criminal complaisance, he dare not name Jesus Christ in that pulpit where he comes to occupy his place!

An abundance of new and unknown beauties still remain in the Holy Scriptures to excite the preacher's emulation.

Whatever be the thought which he wishes to express, he will always find the primary idea, at least, in the books of Revelation, if he have sufficient zeal to read them daily, and sufficient discernment properly to understand them. When searching for a passage which he wants, he thereby discovers other passages, which he reserves for the subjects to which they are adapted. But he ought only to

natural and beautiful variety." (*Fenelon's Dialogues*, pages 115, 124, 127.)

Dr. Blair recommends the language of sacred Scripture to preachers, by saying, that "when properly employed, it is a great ornament to sermons. It may be employed, either in the way of quotation, or allusion. Direct quotations brought from Scripture, in order to support what the preacher inculcates, both give authority to his doctrine, and renders his discourse more solemn and venerable. Allusions to remarkable passages, or expressions of Scripture, when introduced with propriety, has generally a pleasing effect. They afford the preacher a fund of metaphorical expression, which no other composition enjoys, and by means of which he can vary and enliven his style. But he must take care that any such allusions be natural and easy; for if they seem forced, they approach to the nature of conceits." Dr. Blair refers us for examples to Bishop Sherlock's Discourses, vol. i, disc. i, and to Seed's Sermons, sermon iv. (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 115, 116.)

make use of striking quotations; because it is not necessary to speak the language of inspiration in order to say common things.

The preacher may derive from the Bible historical comparisons, the only ones which are suitable for the style of the pulpit, where they always succeed; and those analogies present themselves involuntarily to an orator, who has grown familiar with the sacred books.

Massillon excels in this respect. You will find, in all his discourses, sometimes very short comparisons, which throw light upon his idea, and at other times, comparisons of greater length, which form admirable frames, in which he incloses the picture of morals.

Such is that rhetorical turn which he employs in his sermon "on the Word of God," when he attacks that common abuse of attending upon religious instruction only with a view of depreciating the talents of the preacher. Massillon makes a particular application to his hearers of the reproach which Joseph addressed, in disguise, to his brethren:—"It is not to seek for bread that ye are come into Egypt; ye are come here as spies, to observe the weak places of this country: *ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come*," Gen xlii, 9.

The same orator also avails himself of this figure, in his sermon upon "Backsliding," when he paints the situation of the sinner, who, after having been recovered, finally relapses into his criminal habits: Massillon compares him to the image of Dagon, which, having been thrown down before the ark, was forthwith replaced upon the altar by the priests of the Philistines; "but the idol having fallen a second time, useless efforts were made to restore this mutilated statue, which remained stretched out upon the earth, and for ever immovable; *only the stump of Dagon was left to him.*"* The application of the fate of Dagon

* 1 Sam v, 4; Kings v, 5. Porro Dagon solus truncus remanserat in loco suo. (*Vulg.*)

to the destiny of sinners, furnishes Massillon with admirable elucidations, which he would never have thought of without this allusion.*

The Abbe Boismont, whose success has been so brilliant in the career of Christian eloquence, and principally in the species of funeral oration, has made a very ingenious use of a passage of sacred writ, in his eulogium of Louis XV.

He begins with recalling all the misfortunes of France, from the beginning of this century until the wise and prosperous ministry of Cardinal de Fleury; and, in describing the changes which took place at this period in administration, all the branches of which had been disgraced by abuses of long standing, he rises to the tone of Bossuet:—"Louis said to Cardinal de Fleury, as formerly the Lord God to the Prophet Ezekiel, *Breathe upon these slain that they may live*, Ezek. xxxvii, 7, 9. The spirit of life suddenly enters into the dry and withered bones. A gentle, but powerful motion is communicated to all the members of this vast wasted body; all the parts reunite, and adapt themselves to each other: *and the bones come together, bone to its bone.*"

In this funeral oration there are many admirable traits, equally sublime, and pictures of the finest eloquence, worthy of the orator who had deservedly obtained universal applause in his celebration of the queen and the dauphin.

* Some of our English sermons are enriched with such successful Scriptural allusions and applications of Scripture language as, at least, equal any thing quoted by M. Maury from Massillon and Boismont. In some of Sterne's works this talent is conspicuous. See the note and quotation from Mr. Knox, end of section lvi.

SECTION LI.

OF THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.

CHRISTIAN orators! Ye are the ministers of the word of God; ye ought, therefore, to draw the substance of your discourses from the sacred books, and to speak the language of the invisible preacher whom ye represent. If it be true that your lips are the depositaries of science, how will ye be instructive if ye be not yourselves instructed? Ye will at best preach a morality merely human; ye will never, when discoursing on Divine truths, impart to your style the energy of apt expression, if to the study of the sacred volumes ye do not join the reading of tradition.

Fenelon, in his "Dialogues concerning Eloquence," hath characterized, with equal precision and taste, the fathers of the Greek and Latin Church; and the opinion of the archbishop of Cambray ought to be law.*

We reckon among the fathers many very learned writers in profane antiquity, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius of Cæsarea, Jerom, and Augustine.

I am aware, that in their writings the purity of style doth not always correspond with the extent of erudition, especially if we compare them with Cicero and Demos-

* See in the English translation of *Fenelon's Dialogues* on this point, pp. 128, 130, and 142.

See also M. Rollin's sentiments on this head, and his recommendation to the study of the fathers, in his *Belles Lettres*, vol. ii, c. 3, sec. 4, p. 354.

Dr. Blair makes the following judicious remark respecting those authors denominated "fathers of the Church:"—

"Among the Latin fathers, Lactantius and Minutius Felix are the most remarkable for purity of style; and, in a later age, the famous St. Augustine possesses a considerable share of sprightliness and strength. But none of the fathers afford any just models of eloquence. Their language, as soon as we descend to the third or fourth century, becomes harsh; and they are, in general, infected with the taste of that age, a love of swoln and strained thoughts, and the play of words." (*Blair*, vol. ii, p. 36.)

thenes. But according to the judicious observation of the Abbe de Fleury (Second Discourse) when it is intended to appreciate the merits of the fathers of the Church, we must not forget the time when, nor the country where they lived; nor to contrast them with their most celebrated contemporaries, Ambrose with Symmachus; Basil with Libanius; and then we perceive how much superior they have been to their age.

It is not, however, requisite that a preacher should read all tradition. For this, his life would scarcely suffice. But by making a selection of two or three fathers of the Church, the most consonant to his genius; by confining himself, moreover, to their rhetorical writings he will find in them ideas sufficiently striking to embellish and give weight to his sermons.

St. John Chrysostom is principally deserving of having the choice of a Christian orator fixed upon him. His diction is pure and splendid; his eloquence is tender and persuasive; and he abounds so much in sublime descriptions, or ingenious ideas, that we find passages to quote in every page of his writings.

Pope Clement XI. who, during his pontificate, preached yearly at Rome on Easter and Christmas days, and the feast of St. Peter, had the art of making an admirable use of Chrysostom's writings. His homilies are an excellent assemblage of the most striking thoughts and pathetic sentiments of the fathers of the Church.*

* "As to the style of sermons, it offends against all rules, if it be not pathetic, nervous, and sublime. The path hath been pointed out by St. Chrysostom. He who was always with God, always fed by the milk of the word, and perfectly acquainted with the human heart, speaks, thunders, shakes, and leaves to sinners no other answer but cries and remorse." (*Pope Ganganelli's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 82.)

Archbishop Fenelon thus characterizes Chrysostom:—"His style is copious, but he did not study false ornaments. All his discourse tends to persuasion: he placed every thing with judgment, and was well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and the manners of men-

Bossuet, who, himself, may be reckoned among the fathers, and whom, in the present day, we quote in our sermons, as we do them, sufficiently testifies, by his example, how advantageous it is for a Christian orator to study the fathers. He draws from their writings the most profound maxims, the most convincing arguments, sometimes even sublime comparisons, which enrich the eloquence of his discourses.

Who would not be ambitious to have borrowed, as he did, this admirable description from St. Augustine, which represents the troubles of human life? "Worldlings do not think that they use exercise, unless they disquiet themselves; nor that they move, unless they make a noise. That man, who is complaining of too much labour, were he delivered from that trouble could not endure his repose. At one time the day's work appears to him too short; at another time his leisure would appear to him a burthen: he loves his servitude, and is pleased with his weight; and this constant impulse, which involves him in a thousand embarrassments, prevents him from gratifying himself with the image of unrestrained liberty. As a tree, says St. Austin, which the wind seems to caress, when sporting with its leaves and branches, although this wind only bends it with the agitation, and tosses it, some-

He entered into their hearts; and rendered things familiarly sensible to them. He had sublime and solid notions; and is sometimes very affecting. Upon the whole, we must own he is a great orator." (*Dialogues concerning Eloquence*, dial. iii, pp. 143, 144.)

"Among the Greek fathers," says Dr. Blair, "the most distinguished by far for his oratorial merit is St. Chrysostom. His language is pure; his style highly figured. He is copious, smooth, and sometimes pathetic. But he retains, at the same time, much of that character which has been always attributed to the Asiatic eloquence, diffuse and redundant to a great degree, and often overwrought and tumid. He may be read, however, with advantage for the eloquence of the pulpit, as being freer of false ornaments than the Latin fathers." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 37.)

times on one side, sometimes on the other, with vast caprice; you would say, however, that the tree diverted itself with the freedom of its motions, 'in like manner,' saith this great bishop, 'while the men of the world have no true liberty, being almost always obliged to submit to various occupations, which impel them like a wind, they, nevertheless, imagine that they are playing with a certain air of liberty and peace, while giving indulgence to their vague and fluctuating desires.'"*

SECTION LII.

OF QUOTATIONS FROM PROFANE AUTHORS.

It is sometimes allowable to quote, in the pulpit, the profane writers of antiquity, provided that such citations be not long, nor frequent, nor accompanied with historical relations foreign to religion.

Our old preachers flattered themselves that they were very eloquent, when they had collected into one barbarous compilation, which they call a Christian discourse, some shreds of poetry, eloquence, or history.

The author of "Pulpit Maxims" ingeniously compares those sermons blended with the principles of religion, and the maxims of paganism, "to the temple at Jerusalem built with the marble and cedars of King Hiram."

But it is no less certain that Christian eloquence doth not exclude heathen testimonies, when the orator is pointing out the duties of morality or the particulars of good conduct.

S. Basil has composed a treatise in order to prove the utility of reading heathen authors. Bossuet, whose learning equalled his eloquence, drew, from time to time, out of those authors, sublime thoughts, which he quoted in the

* Second sermon for the Thursday of the second week of Lent, upon "Final Impenitence." Tanquam olivæ pendentes in arbore, ducentibus ventis, quasi quadam libertate auræ perfruuntur, vago quodam desiderio suo. (*August. in Psal.* 136, vol. iv, p. 1528.)

pulpit; and Bourdaloue in his sermon on "the love of riches" hath paraphrased this maxim of Horace,

Rem si possis recte, si non, quocumque modo, rem.

Let us not, however, make an improper use of these examples. We shall never be blamed for not having founded our proofs upon a profane authority; and we shall do an equal injury to piety and taste, if we relate ideas taken from heathens, when we can find them equally well, and perhaps better, expressed in Scripture, or in tradition.

SECTION LIII.

OF THE STUDY OF A PREACHER.

I WILL not, then, read the moralists, the poets, and the orators of antiquity, with a view of multiplying such heathen quotations, but rather, in order to know the human heart, and to form my taste upon the models of eloquence. This study is more useful than the reading of sermons.

Is it your aim to excel in Christian eloquence? At first consult collections of sermons. But, when once you become conversant with them, shut those books, they would blunt your imagination, and thereby contract your ideas, although they may be filled with sublime passages.

Aim at original composition.* Search for food to

* "Original writers are and ought to be, great favourites, for they are great benefactors; they extend the republic of letters, and add a new province to its dominion. The pen of an original writer, like Armida's wand, out of a barren waste, calls a blooming spring. An original, though but indifferent, yet has something to boast; it is something to say with him in Horace,

Meo sum pauper in ære;

and to share ambition with no less than Cesar, who declared he had rather be first in a village, than the second at Rome."

"But why are originals so few? Not because the writer's harvest is over, the great reapers of antiquity having left nothing to be gleaned after them; nor because the human mind's teeming time is past, nor because it is incapable of putting forth unprecedented births; but because illustrious examples engross prejudice and intimidate. They

nourish your mind, without degrading yourself to a level with plagiarists.

No spare time will remain for reading the sermons of others, when we ourselves apply in earnest to composition.

Prefer, then, to all those discourses which have been consecrated by public admiration, works no less valuable to eloquence, and much more profitable to the preacher. Such are Fenelon's Letters, in which this profound moralist points out every singular character, by the knowledge which he hath of the human heart; the works of the Abbe de Fleury, who interests by his candour, astonishes by the universality of his knowledge, always engages when speaking of religion, because it is evident that he loves it, and displays, without ostentation, a boldness of reasoning, which is, in him, the necessary consequence of sincerity;* some excellent books of Port Royal,† in which

engross our attention, and so prevent a due inspection of ourselves; they prejudice our judgment in favour of their abilities, and so lessen the sense of our own; and they intimidate us with the splendour of their renown, and thus under diffidence bury our strength. Nature's impossibilities, and those of diffidence, lie wide asunder." (*Young's Conjectures on Original Composition; Vid.* his Works, vol. vi, pp. 70, 71, 73.)

* Abbe de Fleury was the author of many excellent works, all in French, and very well written. Among these are, "the Manners of the Jews," (translated into English by Farneworth;) also "the Manners of the Christians;" "an Historical Catechism;" "the Method of Study;" "the Institutes of the Ecclesiastical or Canon Law;" "the Duty of Masters and Servants." His principal work, which has been much esteemed, is his "Ecclesiastical History," 20 volumes in 4to. They breathe a spirit truly philosophic." (*See New and General Biog. Dict.*)

† Messrs. de Port Royal was the general denomination which comprehended all the Jansenist writers; but was however applied in a more confined and particular sense to those Jansenists who passed their days in pious exercises and religious pursuits, in the retreat of Port Royal, a mansion situated at a little distance from Paris. It is well known that several writers of superior genius, extensive learning, and uncommon eloquence, resided in this sanctuary of letters." (*Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.* vol. iv, p. 350. n.)

we recognize the voice of religion, and the poetry of the sacred books; the Sinner's Guide, by Grenade, in which he alarms the apprehensions of the wicked, and holds them, so to speak, suspended between the terrors of remorse, and of Divine justice; the Imitation of Jesus Christ,* a master-piece of simplicity and plainness, and "the best book," says Fontenelle, "which can proceed from the hand of man, seeing the Gospel doth not come from thence;" (*Life of Corneille;*) in a word, the writings of Francis de Salis, which breathe the most unaffected piety, and where we should find still more pathos, were there somewhat less of wit.†

SECTION LIV.

OF PATHOS.

It is by this persuasive *pathos;*‡ it is by the language of the heart, that we discover a writer who makes it his

* By Thomas à Kempis. His work is perhaps as much known and read by Protestants, as any other religious performance of a Catholic writer. He died 1471, aged 91. (See *Dupin's History.*)

† After this imperfect enumeration of French theological writers by our author, it may, with pleasure, be observed, that, perhaps, no nation abounds with an equal number of solid, judicious, and instructive discourses, as doth the English. To attempt an enumeration of them would be impossible, and indeed needless, as every reader will consult his own taste.

‡ *Pathos*, in the French *l'onction.* Dr. Blair gives us the idea connected with this term, when he says, "The chief characteristics of pulpit eloquence are *gravity* and *warmth.* The serious nature of the subject requires *gravity;* their importance to mankind requires *warmth.* The union of these two must be studied by all preachers, as of the utmost consequence, both in the composition of their discourses, and in their manner of delivery. This is what the French call *onction;* the affecting, penetrating, interesting manner, flowing from a strong sensibility of heart in the preacher to the importance of those truths which he delivers, and an earnest desire that they may make full impression on the hearts of his hearers." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 105.)

practice to read those various works of piety; for it is this happy talent of affecting, which doubtless constitutes the principal object of Christian eloquence.

All men have not sufficient ability to lay hold of an ingenious idea; but all have souls capable of being affected with a weighty sentiment; and never are the hearers more universally attentive than when the preacher becomes pathetic.*

Guard, however, against that affected sensibility which betrays itself by the accents of the voice without penetrating to the very bottom of the soul; and which is ready to die away in the ear of the auditor, when it derives no internal animation from the composition.

"I require not," says Cicero, "a feigned compassion, nor incentives to sorrow, but that which is real, flowing from the sighs of a wounded heart."†

After a terrifying passage which has distressed me, I

* On this point let us regard two able judges and eloquent writers. The first is Pope Ganganelli, who says:—"As to the style of sermons, it offends against all rules if it be not pathetic, nervous, and sublime. If a preacher only instruct, he does no more than prepare the mind; if he only affect the passions, he leaves but a slight impression; but if he scatter the ointment of grace, while he diffuses the light of truth, he has fulfilled his duty." (*Ganganelli's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 82.)

Dr. Blair says:—"The only effectual method to become pathetic is to be moved yourselves. There are a thousand interesting circumstances suggested by real passion which no art can imitate, and no refinement can supply. There is obviously a contagion among the passions.

> Ut ridentibus arrident, sic flentibus adflent,
> Humani vultus.

The internal emotion of the speaker adds a pathos to his words, his looks, his gestures, and his whole manner; which exerts a power almost irresistible over those who hear him. Afficiamur antequam afficere conemur, says Quintilian." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, p. 193.)

† Non simulacra neque incitamenta doloris, sed luctus verus atque lamenta vera et spirantia. (*Orat.* lib. 2.)

wish the orator to approach me again with affection; to revive my almost extinguished hopes, and after having threatened me with an avenging God, to show me a God who pardoneth.

SECTION LV.

OF THE PATHOS OF FENELON.

That is a charming and flowing eloquence, which, far from exciting violent agitations, gently insinuates itself into the soul, and there awakes the tenderest affections; which is a succession of natural and moving sentiments, copiously diffusing themselves, so that, when experienced, the orator who inspires them is forgotten, and we suppose that we are conversing with ourselves. Each word increases the emotion, and produces a certain sympathy which affects and expands every heart.

Such is the eloquence of Fenelon. The first part of his discourse "on the Consecration of the Elector of Cologne," is written with the energy and sublimity of Bossuet; the second denotes a sensibility which is peculiar to Fenelon. I shall only mention one example:—

"O pastors! far from you let the contracted heart be banished. Enlarge, enlarge your bowels of affection. Ye know nothing, if ye are only acquainted with the voice of authority, reproof, correction, and with pointing out the letter of the law. Be fathers; this is not sufficient, be mothers; travail in birth again till Jesus Christ be formed in the heart."*

* M. Maury, elsewhere, speaks of this amiable author by the appellation of the "immortal Fenelon," and declares that his discourse upon the consecration of the elector of Cologne is one of the chief works of modern eloquence. (*Reflexions sur les Sermons de M. Bossuet*, p. 328.)

The character and method of Fenelon have been thus described:—"He visited his diocess very diligently, and preached in all the

SECTION LVI.

OF OTHER PATHETIC ORATORS: BOURDALOUE, FLAVIAN, LAS CASAS, CHEMINAIS, KEN, GROSVENOR, STERNE, &c.

To require of a preacher discourses written entirely in the pathetic style would be to adopt very mistaken ideas of Christian eloquence. It is dangerous to enlarge too much in affecting passages. "Commiseration," says Cicero, "ought to be short of duration, for nothing dries up sooner than tears."* The effect is weakened when the auditor is suffered to remain too long in the same state, and when no relief to sensibility is admitted, nor any suspension to eloquence.

churches of it. In his public instructions he suited his discourses to every capacity; speaking to the weak in an easy and familiar manner, while he raised his style for those who had a more elevated genius. His sermons flowed from his heart; he did not write them down, and hardly meditated on them beforehand. He only shut himself up in his closet to obtain by his prayers the knowledge he wanted. His only view was to be like a good father, to comfort, to relieve, and to instruct his flock. He was a man of extensive learning, great genius, and of an exquisite taste and irreproachable morals." Was born 1651, died 1715. (*General Dictionary, in loc.*)

In the eulogium delivered by M. Maury on Archbishop Fenelon, before the French Academy, in 1771, he gives us the following among many other traits of this great and good man:—"The eulogium of the archbishop of Cambray is none other than his history written with faithfulness. Here there is no occasion to exaggerate or dissemble. Instead of attempting to exceed that public admiration which he possesses, we should be glad if we can but keep pace with it while speaking of a man who was the orator of the people, and pleaded the cause of humanity before kings; of a man illustrious by the renown of his name, the eminence of his virtues, the superiority of his talents, the importance of his functions, the character even of his errors; of a man whose mind was entirely engrossed in consulting the happiness of the human race; all whose peculiarities originated in his genius and his virtue, and who, if he failed in being happy, needed but to have an ordinary capacity." (*Eloge de Fenelon*, pp. 354, 355.)

* Commiserationem brevem esse oportet, nihil enim lachrymâ citiùs arescit. (*Ad. Herenium*, lib. 2, 31.)

Labour may render the style correct, forcible, harmonious; but industry never produces a true pathos; for the more it costs the orator to be animated and pathetic, the more is his discourse cold and languishing. Beside, are all subjects susceptible of tender sentiments? Our great masters, on some occasions, durst not venture to pursue this method, even when discussing subjects which seem to border most upon sensibility.

Bourdaloue has composed four different sermons upon the death of Jesus Christ, and yet he hath not made one single Good Friday sermon, of which the distinguishing characteristic should be to affect. His genius always led him to consider the history of the sufferings of the Son of God in another point of view; he, therefore, intimated to his hearers that their shedding of tears was not the design he proposed. "Others have moved you to pity a hundred times," said he in his exordium; "but, for my part, I am desirous of instructing you." Bourdaloue was, nevertheless, affecting; but he had the skill of placing, at proper intervals, those passages which would no longer have had the effect of impressing the auditory, had he heaped them together.

The most celebrated models of pathetic eloquence are the address of Flavian the bishop* to the Emperor Theodosius, in favour of the inhabitants of Thessalonica; the supplication of the virtuous prelate Bartholomew de Las Casas† to Philip II. [Ferdinand] against the murderers

* For an account of Flavian's conduct, and his speech to the emperor, in favour of the inhabitants of Antioch, [not Thessalonica,] whose seditious conduct had provoked Theodosius's threatened vengeance, but which the eloquence and entreaties of Flavian averted, see Universal History, vol. xvi, pp. 417–419, and Chrysost. Orat. xx, pp. 226–234, and Hom. xxi, c. 3. See also the substance of Flavian's noted speech, as reported by Chrysostom, in Rollin's Belles Lettres, vol. ii, c. iii, sec. 2, pp. 215–220; and in Maury's Reflexions sur les Sermons de M. Bossuet, pp. 329–334.

† "All the writings of Las Casas show a solid judgment, profound

of the Mexicans; and the exhortations of Cheminais in behalf of the prisoners.

This discourse of Cheminais is written with as much pathos as simplicity; but the ideas and strokes of oratory

learning, true piety, and an excellent heart." (*Biographical Dictionary.*)

"This man, so famous in the annals of the new world, had accompanied his father in the first voyage made by Columbus. The mildness and simplicity of the Indians affected him so strongly that he made himself an ecclesiastic, in order to devote his labours to their conversion. But this soon became the least of his attentions. As he was more a man than a priest, he felt more for the cruelties exercised against them than for their superstitions. He employed every method in order to comfort the people, for whom he had conceived an attachment, or to soften their tyrants. He became the avowed patron of the Indians; and by his bold interpositions on their behalf, as well as by the respect due to his abilities and character, he had often the merit of setting some bounds to the excesses of his countrymen. He did not fail to remonstrate warmly against the proceedings of Albuquerque, and though he soon found that attention to his own interest rendered that rapacious officer deaf to admonition, he did not abandon the wretched people whose cause he had espoused. He instantly set out for Spain, with the most sanguine hopes of opening the eyes, and softening the heart of Ferdinand by that striking picture of the oppression of his new subjects which he would exhibit to his view.

"He easily obtained admittance to the king, whom he found in a declining state of health. With much freedom, and no less eloquence, he represented to him all the fatal effects of the *repartitionientes*, or distributions, in the new world, boldly charging him with the guilt of having authorized this impious measure, which had brought misery and destruction upon a numerous and miserable race of men, whom Providence had placed under his protection. Ferdinand, whose mind as well as body was much enfeebled by his distemper, was greatly alarmed at this charge of impiety, which, at another juncture, he would have despised. He listened with deep compunction to the discourse of Las Casas, and promised to take into attentive consideration the means of redressing the evil of which he complained.

"After this, Ferdinand in a short time dying, Las Casas applied to his successor Charles V., but none of the schemes of this most amiable prelate were crowned with that success which his benevolence merited." (*Raynal's and Robertson's Histories, passim.*)

are never raised so high as to reach the sublime. In it the style is adapted to the subject, without forming its principal merit.*

Cheminais's manner of writing, so full of sweetness and tenderness, denotes the happiest talent. His sermons breathe a certain attractive and affectionate languor, which must ever give us occasion to regret, that this writer, otherwise enfeebled by habitual infirmities, had not lived long enough to finish his oratorial career.†

* The sermons of Cheminais are on various subjects, and are comprised in four, and sometimes in five volumes, 8vo. They have been much admired. Cheminais was born 1652, and died 1689. (*Vid. Dictionnaire des Predicateurs Francois, in artic.*)

† It is to be confessed, that there are not so many specimens of this sort of pathetic eloquence to be found among English writers, as could be wished. Perhaps no nation can boast of more argumentative and sensible discourses, or of abler defences of every branch of Christian doctrine and duty. But to find that persuasive tenderness, or what the French call *onction*, mingled with the solidity of argument, and the effusions of piety, is more rare. Bishop Ken's Retired Christian resembles, in a good measure, the character ascribed by our author to the writings of Cheminais. In the works of Flavel are intermingled many tender and pathetic expressions. The noted Richard Baxter, also, though too fond of controversy, and his style far from being correct or elegant, has, notwithstanding, in some of his practical pieces, and particularly in that one entitled the Saint's Everlasting Rest, some fine and affecting passages. He only wanted "his genius to be curbed by salutary checks," to have obtained, in his practical works, the character of a pathetic writer. There is in Howe's "Living Temple," a grand and beautiful metaphorical description of human depravity under the idea of a ruinous temple; (p. 155;) and in Bishop Sherlock's discourses, a fine and much admired piece of eloquence, where the character of our blessed Lord is contrasted with that of the impostor Mohammed, (vol. i, p. 271,) though perhaps neither of them can be properly classed as *pathetic pieces.*

Where shall we find many passages more excellent and pathetic in their kind, than in Dr. Grosvenor's sermon, entitled "the Temper of Jesus toward his Enemies?"

The ingenious Dr. Knox has the following sensible observations on the pathetic style, particularly as it is to be found in Scripture, and in the works of Sterne:—

"There must be a charm added by the creative power of genius, which no didactic rules can teach, which cannot be adequately described, but which is powerfully felt by the vibrations of the heart strings, and which causes an irresistible overflowing of the Δακρυων πηγαι, the *sacri fontes lachrymarum*.

"Florid diction and pompous declamation are, indeed, found to be the least adapted of all modes of address to affect the finer sensibilities of nature. Plain words, without epithets, without metaphors, without similes, have oftener excited emotions of the tenderest sympathy, than the most laboured composition of Corneille. A few words of simple pathos will penetrate the soul to the quick, when a hundred lines of declamation shall assail it as feebly and ineffectually as a gentle gale the mountain of Plinlimmon.

"A writer of taste and genius may avail himself greatly in pathetic compositions, by adopting the many words and phrases, remarkable for their beautiful simplicity, which are interspersed in that pleasing, as well as venerable book, the Holy Bible. Beside its astonishing simplicity, it has many a passage exquisitely tender and pathetic.

"Throughout all the works of Sterne, there are interspersed exquisite touches of the pathetic. His pathetic stories are greatly admired. The pathetic was the chief excellence of his writings; his admirers will be displeased if we were to add, that it is the only one which admits of unalloyed applause." (*Knox's Essays*, No. 145.)

"Sterne, who, though he is justly condemned for his libertinism, possessed an uncommon talent for the pathetic, has availed himself greatly of the Scriptural language. In all his most affecting passages he has imitated the turn, style, manner, and simplicity of the sacred writers, and in many of them has transcribed whole sentences. He found no language of his own could equal the finely expressive diction of our common translation. I will quote only one or two instances of his imitations of Scripture, taken from the most admired pieces in the tender style :—'Maria, though not tall, was, nevertheless, of the first order of fine forms. Affliction had touched her looks with something that was scarce earthly, and so much was there about her of all that the heart wishes, or the eye looks for in woman, that could the traces be ever worn out of her brain, or those of Eliza out of mine, she should not only eat of my bread, and drink of my cup, but Maria should lie in my bosom, and be unto me as a daughter.' 'Adieu, poor luckless maiden! imbibe the oil and wine which the compassion of a stranger, as he sojourneth on his way, now pours into thy wounds. The Being who has twice bruised thee, can only bind them up for ever.' Again, in his description of the captive :—'As I darkened the little light he had, he lifted up a hopeless eye toward the

door, then cast it down, shook his head, and went on with his work of affliction. I heard his chains upon his legs, as he turned his body to lay his little stick upon the bundle. He gave a deep sigh. I saw the iron enter into his soul.' It would be easy to adduce many other instances, in which a writer, who eminently excelled in the power of moving the affections, felt himself unequal to the task of advancing the style of pathos to its highest perfection, and sought assistance of the Bible." (*Knox's Essays*, No. 154.)

For more instances of the pathetic sort, the reader is referred to Sterne's well known story of "Le Fevre," in which is that beautiful passage, "The accusing spirit which flew up to heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in; and the recording angel, as he took it down, dropped a tear upon the word and blotted it out for ever." (*Tristram Shandy*, vol. iii, c. 49.) To this may be added the story of "Maria," in vol. iv, c. 83; and the affecting and beautiful story of "La Roche," in the Mirror, vol. ii, pp. 39–62, also, the story of "Mercator," in the Adventurer.

To these may not be improperly added a specimen of affecting eloquence in an American Indian. "I may challenge," says Mr. Jefferson, "the whole orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, and of any more eminent orators, if Europe has furnished more eminent, to produce a single passage superior to the speech of Logan, a Mingo chief, to Lord Dunmore, when governor of Virginia. The following incidents that occurred in the spring of the year 1774, were the occasion of it. A robbery and murder had been committed on the inhabitants of the frontiers of Virginia, by two Indians. The neighbouring whites, according to their custom, undertook to punish this outrage in a summary way. A party was collected, and proceeded in quest of vengeance. Unfortunately, a canoe of women and children, with one man only, was seen coming from the opposite shore, unarmed, and unsuspecting a hostile attack from the whites. The moment the canoe reached the shore, the white party, who had been concealed, singled out their objects, and, at one fire, killed every person in it. This happened to be the family of Logan, who had been long distinguished as a friend of the whites. This unworthy return provoked his vengeance. He accordingly signalized himself in the war which ensued. A decisive battle was soon afterward fought, in which the Indians were defeated, and sued for peace. Logan, however, disdained to be seen among the suppliants. But lest the sincerity of a treaty should be distrusted, from which so distinguished a chief absented himself, he sent by a messenger the following speech, to be delivered to Lord Dunmore:—

'I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin

SECTION LVII.

OF THE PERORATION.

If pathos be requisite in a Christian discourse, it is undoubtedly in the peroration. There the orator ought to set in motion all the springs of sensibility, and to strike the greatest strokes of eloquence.

All moral subjects tend to pathetic conclusions. The attention of the auditory, which always revives toward the close of the sermon, invites the Christian minister to finish instruction by moving and energetic representations, which may powerfully affect the conscience, and leave an indelible impression upon every mind.

Some rhetoricians have laid it down as an established maxim in the art of oratory, to recapitulate, in this part of the discourse, the principal arguments, and to offer an analysis of them.

I make bold to object to this method, which neither Demosthenes nor Cicero ever followed.

If this recapitulation of the proofs ought to terminate a discourse, ought it not especially to be adopted at the bar?

It would be to no purpose to object to me here the

hungry, and he gave him not meat: if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not.

"During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed, as they passed, and said, Logan is the friend of white men. I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood, murdered all the relations of Logan, not sparing even my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it: I have killed many! I have glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? No one.'" (*Jefferson's History of Virginia.*)

example of Cicero, in his beautiful oration against Verres. The orator successively invokes, in his peroration, all the gods and goddesses, whose temples this robber had pillaged, and by this means he draws a more striking picture of his profanations. But what then? Are those sublime apostrophes an analysis of his pleading?

Cicero had proved, at the beginning, that Verres had no military genius, and that he was equally incapable of commanding a fleet or an army; he had afterward gone over the excesses of his debaucheries, his avarice, and his cruelties toward the Roman citizens, whom he caused to be crucified upon the coasts of Sicily, their faces being turned from the Roman shore.

Now Cicero omits all these outrages at the conclusion of his discourse, and only reproaches the accused with his sacrileges.

It is not therefore true, that the Roman orator presents to his judges a summary of his speech in this peroration.

Our most illustrious orators, when concluding a sermon, never recapitulate the plan and arguments of the subject.

Massillon, I confess, hastily runs over some of his ideas in the peroration of his discourse "on the certainty of a future state;" but he does not grow languid, when he touches upon the contradictions with which he charges the wicked; and he quickly extricates himself by some moving passages.

Beside, one single example should not suffice for establishing a general rule. What! ought we then to follow Massillon and Bourdaloue, when even they would be shackled by a proceeding so didactic and uniform? Who doth not perceive that such sort of corollaries would leave both the preacher and the congregation unaffected?

The orator's conclusion must not be confined to simple speculative consequences. He has done nothing, as yet, when he has proved the truth of his principles. This is the point from which he should proceed, in order to sub-

due the passions, that the sinner may retain no excuse, and that conviction may bring him to repentance.

Now, that you may produce such effects, take leave of your proofs and your divisions, and be assured, that whatever is repeated, enfeebles.

Comment upon some verses of a psalm relative to your subject, and in the compunction or in the weaknesses of David, point out the remorse and secret troubles of all. Exhort, instruct, confute, by varied repetitions, and such as may interest the feelings of the different classes of which society is composed. Display all the strength of your genius to prove that happiness doth not consist in pleasure, but in virtue.

What in short shall I say to you? Forget method; forget art itself. Lift up your heart to God by an affectionate prayer. Become the intercessor on behalf of your auditory; that the multitude who resisted your threatenings, may be constrained to yield to the effusions of your Christian charity.

SECTION LVIII.

OF MEMORY.

You may, in vain, have received from nature this happy gift of persuading and moving; in vain may you have brought your talent to perfection by the study of rules; you may attain to eloquence in writing; still you would never speak like an eloquent man, if you were impeded in the delivery of your discourse by the treachery of your memory.

Cicero calls this faculty "the treasure of the soul;"* and he always reckons it among the qualities essential to an orator.

What is not clearly understood is badly repeated; for,

* Memoria thesaurus est mentis. (*De Orat.* 27.)

to a stiff pronunciation, which is already become too perceptible in Christian pulpits, there is added a want of freedom, which wearies the congregation.*

When once hearers experience this disgust, they are afraid of meeting with a similar embarrassment, and never listen afterward without uneasiness. Hence it follows, that a defect of memory, which is by no means injurious to the merit of the orator, does infinite injury to the success of the discourse.

Never, therefore, consider the time lost which you may devote to this mechanical study. It is not this time which you lose, but it is the labour of composition, which becomes fruitless, if you do not carefully make yourself master of a sermon on which you have bestowed much pains.†

Bourdaloue and Massillon, both of them born with treacherous memories, were obliged to have recourse to their manuscripts during almost the whole period of their exercising the sacred ministry; but they perceived at that time, with a degree of mortification, how much

* Quel déplaisir de voir l'orateur entrepris
Relire dans la voûte un sermon mal appris!

† "Those," says Dr. Watts, "who are called to speak in public, are much better heard and accepted when they can deliver their discourse by the help of a genius and ready memory, than when they are forced to read all that they would communicate to their hearers. Reading is certainly a heavier way of conveying our sentiments; and there are very few mere readers who have the felicity of penetrating the soul, and awakening the passions of those who hear, by such a grace and power of oratory, as the man who seems to talk every word from his very heart, and pours out the riches of his own knowledge upon the people around him, by the help of a free and copious memory. This gives life and spirit to every thing that is spoken, and has a natural tendency to make a deeper impression on the minds of men; it awakens the dullest spirits, causes them to receive a discourse with more affection and pleasure, and adds a singular grace and excellency both to the person and his oration." (*Watts on the Improvement of the Mind*, vol. i, 8vo. p. 247.)

they diminished the pleasure which people received in hearing them. The bishop of Clermont, from thence, conceived such a dislike for the pulpit, that he was unwilling to mount it during the twenty-five last years of his life; and it is a fact, that, when urged one day to declare to which of his sermons he gave the preference, he very shrewdly replied, "To that which I know the best."*

The custom of repeating from memory hath brought forward in the road of sacred eloquence that multitude of preachers, who, through indolence or defect of talents, deliver the sermons of others.

As for such, their ministerial labours are wholly confined to the painful and unpleasant task of imprinting in the memory discourses which they have not had the trouble or pleasure of composing. Memory equalizes all Christian orators before the eyes of the people, and serves as a supplement to genius.

But this slight inconvenience may promote religious

* To corroborate our author's remark respecting Bourdaloue and Massillon having treacherous memories, let it be remarked, that "it is often found, that a fine genius has but a feeble memory; for where the genius is bright, and the imagination vivid, the power of memory may be too much neglected, and lose its improvement. An active fancy readily wanders over a multitude of objects, and is continually entertaining itself with new-flying images; it runs through a number of new scenes, or new pages, with pleasure, but without due attention, and seldom suffers itself to dwell long enough upon any of them to make a deep impression thereof upon the mind, and commit itself to everlasting remembrance. This is one plain and obvious reason why there are some persons of very bright parts and active spirits, who have but very short and narrow powers of remembrance; for having riches of their own, they are not solicitous to borrow." (*Watts on the Improvement of the Mind*, vol. i, 8vo. p. 250.)

Useful directions for the improvement of the memory, will be found in Watts on the Improvement of the Mind, vol. i, c. xvii, p. 245, 8vo.; in Mason on Self Knowledge, c. xv, p. 131, 8vo.; and in Rollin's Belles Lettres, b. i, c. 3, sec. iv, p. 244, 8vo.

instruction, without preventing the improvement of the art of preaching; and it may be inferred that he who preaches the sermons of others does so from an inability to produce better himself.

Should it ever be the case that ministers of the Gospel would wish to rest satisfied with reading religious instructions from the pulpit, their hearers would become fewer and their discourses less successful; for memory resembles a sudden inspiration, whereas reading is only a cold communication.*

* If the practice of preaching sermons memoriter be objectionable, the practice of reading them verbatim is still more so. Against the former method, which M. Maury seems to approve of, it may be objected, that it renders preaching a great labour; that if the preacher forget one word he perplexes himself and confuses the auditory; and that it puts a restraint upon pronunciation, action, and the movement of the passions, while the mind is wholly taken up with recollection and repetition. (See *Perkin's Art of Preaching*, vol. ii, c. 9.)

A slavish attachment to written notes, which has become so prevalent in the present day, both among the established and dissenting clergy, unquestionably tends to enervate the energy which should accompany the delivery of sermons, and, in some measure, to weaken and prevent the desired effects.

The judicious reflection of our author concerning the consequences of "ministers resting satisfied with reading religious instructions from the pulpit," has great weight in it, and should be seriously considered by ministers, whose concern it is to be useful. Facts strongly corroborate the justness of his reasoning. The most accurate and sensible discourses of mere readers are disregarded, and their hearers are comparatively few, while the discourses of others, which appear to flow "ex imo pectore," though, perhaps, less accurate and elegant, are listened to with pleasure and avidity. In this respect human nature is the same in every country, and will continue to be so till the end of time.

That the above hints, which the translator throws out with all deference, may not appear to lose the weight and support of authority, the reader is presented with the following sentiments of wise and capable judges.

We shall begin with Horace, who tells us, in general, that the speaker who has thoroughly digested his subject will be at no great loss for suitable expressions:—

"Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur." (*Hor. Art. Poet.* i, 311.)

Let us next attend to the united suffrages of two respectable dignitaries of the Church of England: Bishop Wilkins says:—"As for composing, it will not be convenient for a constant preacher to pen all his discourse, or to tie himself to phrases; when the matter is well digested, expressions will easily follow; whereas to be confined to words, beside the oppression of the memory, will much prejudice the operation of the understanding and affections. The judgment will be much weakened, and the affections dulled, when the memory is overburthened. A man cannot ordinarily be so much affected himself, and consequently he cannot affect others, with things he speaks by rote: he should take some liberty to prosecute a matter according to his more immediate apprehen ions of it; by which many particulars may be suggested, not before thought of, according to the working of his own affections, and the various alterations that may appear in the auditory; and beside, they will breed a παρρησια, such a fitting confidence as should be in that orator, who is to have a power over the affections of others, of which such a one is scarce capable." (*Wilkin's Ecclesiast.* sec. 2.) To the same effect see Fenelon's Dialogues concerning Eloquence, dialogue ii, p. 78, &c.

Bishop Burnet gives us his sentiments on this subject, as follows:—"This leads me to consider the difference that is between reading and speaking of sermons. Reading is peculiar to this nation, and is endured in no other. It has, indeed, made our sermons more exact, and has thus produced many volumes of the best that are extant. But, after all, though some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those affections which they recommend, that, in them, we see both the correctness of reading and the seriousness of speaking sermons; yet every one is not so happy: some by hanging their heads perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read, and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the matter of their sermons, that, as they are generally read with very little life or affection, so they are heard with as little regard or esteem. Those who read ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than, for the most part, they are, to read true; to pronounce with an emphasis; to raise their head, and to direct their eyes to their hearers: and if they practised more, alone, the just way of reading, they might deliver their sermons with much more advantage. Man is a low sort of creature: he does not (nay, the greater part cannot) consider things in themselves without those little seasonings that must recommend them to their affections. Beside, the people, who are too apt to censure the clergy, are easily carried into an ob-

vious reflection on reading, that it is an effect of laziness." (*Burnet's Pastoral care*, sec. ix.)

"The learned Dr. Watts, in his Thoughts, entitled, Words without Spirit, describes the following character:—Lectorius is a pious man, and worthy minister in a country parish: his discourses are well formed, his sentiments on almost every subject are just and proper, his style is modern, and not unpolite, nor does he utterly neglect the passions in the turn of his composures; yet I cannot call him a good preacher, for he does not only use his written notes to secure his method and to relieve his memory, but he scarce ever takes his eye from off his book to address himself with life and spirit to the people: for this reason many of his hearers fall asleep; the rest of them sit from January to December regardless and unconcerned: an air of indolence reigns through the faces of his auditory, as if it were a matter of no importance, or not addressed to them, and his ministrations have little power or success. In his last sermon he had a use of reproof for some vices which were practised in a public and shameless manner in his parish, and he thought that these sins ought not to escape a public rebuke. The paragraph was well drawn up, and indeed it was animated with some just and awful severities of language; yet he had not courage enough to chide the guilty, nor to animate his voice with any just degree of zeal. However, the good man did his best, he went into the pulpit and read them a chiding.

"His conduct is just the same when he designs his address in his paper to any of the softer passions; for by the coldness of his pronunciation, and keeping his eye ever fixed on his notes, he makes very little impression on his hearers. When he should awaken senseless and obstinate sinners, and pluck them as brands out of the burning, he only reads to them out of his book some words of pity or perhaps a use of terror; and if he would lament over their impenitence and approaching ruin, he can do no more than read them a chapter of lamentation.

"Since there are so many of the kindred of Lectorius in our nation, it is no wonder that some of them arise to vindicate the family and their practice. Do not the English sermons, say they, exceed those of other nations, because they are composed with so much justness and accuracy, and by careful reading they are delivered with great exactness to the people, without trusting one sentence to the frailty of the memory, or the warmth of sudden imagination? I am sure it may be replied, that if the English sermons exceed those of our neighbours, the English preachers would exceed themselves, if they would learn the art of reading by the glance of an eye, so as never to interrupt the force of their argument, nor the vivacity and pathos of their pronunciation; or if they made themselves so much masters

of what they have written, and delivered it with such life and spirit, such freedom and fervency, as though it came all fresh from the head and the heart. It is by this art of pronouncing, as well as by a warm composure, that some of the French preachers reign over their assemblies, like Cicero or Demosthenes of old, and that, with such superior dignity and power as is seldom seen now-a-days in an English audience, whatsoever esteem may be paid to our writings.

"A paper with the most pathetic lines written upon it has no fear or hope, no zeal or compassion; it is conscious of no design, nor has any solicitude for success; and a mere reader, who coldly tells the people what his paper says, seems to be as void of all these necessary qualifications as his paper is." (*Watts's Miscellaneous Thoughts*, No. xxvi, pp. 104–106, 8vo.)

Dr. Blair shall conclude the authorities quoted upon this point:—"With regard to the pulpit, it has certainly been a great disadvantage that the practice of reading sermons has prevailed so universally in England. This may, indeed, have introduced accuracy; but it has done great prejudice to eloquence; for a discourse read is far inferior to an oration spoken. It leads to a different sort of composition, as well as of delivery; and can never have an equal effect upon any audience. The odium of the different sects, about the time of the restoration, drove the Established Church from that warmth which the sectaries were judged to have carried too far, into the opposite extreme of a studied coolness, and composure of manners. Hence, from the art of persuasion, which preaching ought always to be, it has passed, in England, into mere reasoning and instruction; which not only has brought down the eloquence of the pulpit to a lower tone than it might justly assume; but has produced this farther effect, that by accustoming the public ear to such cool and dispassionate discourses, it has tended to fashion other kinds of public speaking upon the same model." (*Blair's Lectures*, vol. ii, pp. 43, 44.)

The same author says elsewhere, that "the practice of reading sermons is one of the greatest obstacles to the eloquence of the pulpit in Great Britain, where alone this practice prevails. No discourse, which is designed to be persuasive, can have the same force when read as when spoken. The common people all feel this, and their prejudice against this practice is not without foundation in nature: what is gained hereby in point of correctness is not equal to what is lost in point of persuasion and force." (*Ibid.* p. 118.)

SECTION LIX.

OF THE ACTION OF AN ORATOR.

After a sermon has been composed, and even committed to memory, much still remains for the orator to execute; for the success of the composition depends upon the manner of delivery.

This concluding particular ought to be the subject of a separate work.

The ancients regarded delivery as a very considerable branch of the art of oratory, and have carried this talent to a degree of perfection, of which we have no idea.

For such as are merely desirous to avoid the common faults in declamation, the following are the principal precautions which ought to be adopted.

They should indulge a favourable hope of the success of their performance at the very moment of delivery, that they may speak without reluctance or uneasiness. They should be deeply penetrated with their subject, and recall what passed in their mind while engaged in composition. They should diffuse throughout every part of the discourse the ardour with which they are animated. They should speak authoritatively, in order to arrest the attention of the hearers. They should avoid the declamation of an actor, and be cautious of introducing theatrical pantomime in the pulpit, which will never succeed. They should begin with pitching their voice at a proper medium, so that the tone may be capable of rising without producing discord, and of being lowered without becoming inaudible. They may be well assured that the effect is lost, when they attempt to strain their voice to the highest pitch; that bawling repels attention instead of assisting it, and that the lower they sink their voice in pathetic passages, the better they are heard. They should not allow themselves to make use of a multiplicity of gestures; and they should especially guard against laying an undue stress on a parti-

cular word in the general movement of a period. They should avoid all corporeal agitation, and never strike the pulpit either with the feet or hands. They should vary the inflections of their voice with each rhetorical figure, and their intonations with every paragraph. Let them imitate the simple and impressive accents of nature in delivery as well as in composition. In a word, with the rapidity of utterance, they should blend pauses, which are always striking when but seldom used and properly timed. Such are the innocent artifices which a Christian orator may render subservient to the success of his ministry.*

Bourdaloue's action was very impressive, although he continually had his eyes shut when he was preaching.

Massillon spoke also with much authority, but scarcely made use of any action.

The Abbe Poulle and the Abbe Renaud, an orator of older standing, have united to their other talents action of a higher quality; and there is no preacher of this century who has been able to equal them in this respect.

It is an excellent method to revise a sermon as soon as it has been preached. The pulpit discovers its beauties and its faults; and provided the orator is skilful to remark the impression that the discourse makes upon the auditory, it is easy for him to observe the weak or prolix passages which require to be improved.

Let him, then, pass judgment upon himself when quitting the pulpit, less by the report of others, than by his own observations.

* Advices respecting an orator's action are to be found in Fenelon's Dialogues ii, pp. 65–76, in Burgh's Essay upon Pronunciation and Gesture; also, in Dr. James Fordyce's Sermon on the Eloquence, and Essay on the Action of the Pulpit. See also many useful hints concerning the ministerial character and conduct in the same author's Charge at the Ordination of his Successor, the Rev. Mr. Lindsay. Likewise, the Rev. Mr. Ryland's Sermon to the Bristol Education Society, 1780.

SECTION LX.

OF MOTIVES TO EXCITE THE EMULATION OF CHRISTIAN ORATORS.

I AM aware that these multiplied corrections occasion very painful labour to Christian preachers. Nevertheless, that which is really disheartening and seriously alarming to us in our ministry, is neither the study which composition requires, nor the restriction which memory imposes on us; but the discouragements increasing as we grow old in our profession; the lassitude, which perpetually attends the repetition of sermons, no longer delivered but with reluctance; the certainty of discovering faults continually in our discourses, and of finding ourselves, thus, not only very much on this side perfection, but even below the level of our own abilities; and, above all, the indifference of our age for religion. Hence it is that persons attend to religious instruction as they would to a profane spectacle; that they are desirous of reducing our zeal to the sacrifice of the most important truths, and the most forcible eloquence, to I know not what frivolous subject, or rhetorical flowers; and that, in fine, it seems as if it were expected of us to degrade ourselves, both as apostles and orators, in order to please the multitude.

These draughts are no doubt bitter. It is, however, necessary to swallow them, should we only succeed in reclaiming one wicked man to virtue, of preserving one wretched man from despair; in a word, of preventing one single crime from the earth.

Ah! what more can be necessary in order to quicken our ardour? Is there a virtuous and feeling mind that can despise such a delightful reward?

We shall have fulfilled the end of our vocation when we render ourselves useful to men; in their felicity we shall receive an indemnification for all our sacrifices: the pleasing remembrance of our youthful labours will serve to

delight the solitude, and to console the inactivity of our advanced years; and, when death shall lay his heavy hand upon our eye lids, we shall each be able to say to that great God, whose laws we have published, "O my Father! thou hast given me thy children to instruct. I restore them to thee better. Remember all the blessings which thou hast poured upon thy people through the instrumentality of thy ministering servant. Let the tears which I have dried up, the tears which I have excited when pleading in thy name, plead with thee on my behalf. I have been the instrument of thy clemency: make me hereafter the object of thy tender mercies."

Every other inducement, doubtless, dwindles to a point before these great objects.

If it were allowable, when entering upon this course of life, to hold human encouragements in any degree of estimation, I should say, without dread of contradiction, that, with a view of reviving the relish for evangelical eloquence, the same means are made use of among us which excited so successful an emulation in the excellent days of the age of Louis XIV.

Never, in the record of ecclesiastical preferments, have Christian orators found a more distinguished attention paid to their labours, nor a more marked good will to reward their talents.

After having, in this manner, unfolded the ideas which have arisen in my own mind on the subject of eloquence, I am not afraid of being charged with having sacrificed the rules of taste to the purposes of my own vanity.

The theories of individuals are, for the most part, only indirect apologies for the compositions of their authors; and despair of equalling the ancient models often gives rise to extravagant systems.

But if my rhetorical writings be inferior to my theory, I can, at least, willingly bear this testimony from the bottom of my heart, that, in deriving the principles of eloquence

from nature, or from the chief performances of our greatest masters, I have been actuated by no other motive than a warm attachment to truth, and the most earnest solicitude to contribute to the advancement of science.

DIRECTIONS

CONCERNING PRONUNCIATION AND GESTURE.

BY THE REV. JOHN WESLEY.

SECTION I.

HOW WE MAY SPEAK SO AS TO BE HEARD WITHOUT DIFFICULTY, AND WITH PLEASURE.

1. Before we enter upon particular rules, I would advise all who can, (1.) To study the art of speaking betimes, and to practise it as often as possible, before they have contracted any of the common imperfections or vices of speaking; for these may easily be avoided at first, but when they are once learned, it is extremely difficult to unlearn them. I advise all young persons, (2.) To be governed in speaking, as in all other things, by reason rather than example, and, therefore, to have an especial care whom they imitate therein; and to imitate only what is right in their manner of speaking, not their blemishes and imperfections.

2. The first business of a speaker is, so to speak, that he may be heard and understood with ease. In order to this, it is a great advantage to have a clear, strong voice; such, at least, as will fill the place where you speak, so as to be heard by every person in it. To strengthen a weak voice, read or speak something aloud, for at least half an hour every morning; but take care not to strain

your voice at first: begin low, and raise it by degrees to the height.

3. If you are apt to falter in your speech, read something in private daily, and pronounce every word and syllable so distinctly, that they may all have their full sound and proportion. If you are apt to stammer at such and such particular expressions, take particular care, first, to pronounce them plainly. When you are once able to do this, you may learn to pronounce them more fluently at your leisure.

The chief faults of speaking are:—

(1.) The speaking too loud. This is disagreeable to the hearers, as well as inconvenient for the speaker. For they must impute it either to ignorance or affectation, which is never so inexcusable as in preaching.

Every man's voice should indeed fill the place where he speaks; but if it exceeds its natural key, it will be neither sweet, nor soft, nor agreeable, were it only on this account, that he cannot then give every word its proper and distinguishing sound.

(2.) The speaking too low. This is, of the two, more disagreeable than the former. Take care, therefore, to keep between the extremes; to preserve the key, the command of your voice; and to adapt the loudness of it to the place where you are, or the number of persons to whom you speak.

In order to this, consider whether your voice be naturally loud or low; and if it incline to either extreme, correct this first in your ordinary conversation. If it be too low, converse with those that are deaf; if too loud, with those who speak softly.

(3.) The speaking in a thick, cluttering manner. Some persons mumble, or swallow some words or syllables, and do not utter the rest articulately or distinctly. This is sometimes owing to a natural defect; sometimes to a sudden flutter of spirits; but oftener to a bad habit.

To cure this, accustom yourself, both in conversation

and reading, to pronounce every word distinctly. Observe how full a sound some give to every word, and labour to imitate them. If no other way avail, do as Demosthenes did; who cured himself of this natural defect, by repeating orations every day with pebbles in his mouth.

(4.) The speaking too fast. This is a common fault; but not a little one; particularly when we speak of the things of God. It may be cured by habituating yourself to attend to the weight, sense, and propriety of every word you speak.

(5.) The speaking too slow is not a common fault; and when we are once warned of it, it may be easily avoided.

(6.) The speaking with an irregular, desultory, and uneven voice, raised or depressed unnaturally or unseasonably. To cure this, you should take care not to begin your periods either too high or too low; for that would necessarily lead you to an unnatural and improper variation of the voice. And remember, never either to raise or sink your voice without a particular reason, arising either from the length of the period, or the sense or spirit of what you speak.

(7.) But the greatest and most common fault of all, is, the speaking with a tone: some have a womanish, squeaking tone; some a singing or canting one; some a high, swelling, theatrical tone, laying too much emphasis on every sentence; some have an awful, solemn tone; others an odd, whimsical, whining one, not to be expressed in words.

To avoid all kinds of unnatural tones, the only rule is this,—Endeavour to speak in public just as you do in common conversation. Attend to your subject, and deliver it in the same manner as if you were talking of it to a friend. This, if carefully observed, will correct both this and almost all the other faults of a bad pronunciation.

For a good pronunciation is nothing but a natural, easy, and graceful variation of the voice, suitable to the nature and importance of the sentiments we deliver.

4. If you would be heard with pleasure, in order to make the deeper impression on your hearers, First, study to render your voice as soft and sweet as possible; and the more, if it be naturally harsh, hoarse, or obstreperous; which may be cured by constant exercise. By carefully using this every morning, you may in a short time wear off these defects, and contract such a smooth and tuneful delivery, as will recommend whatever you speak.

5. Secondly, Labour to avoid the odious custom of coughing and spitting while you are speaking. And if at some times you cannot wholly avoid it, yet take care you do not stop in the middle of a sentence, but only at such times as will least interrupt the sense of what you are delivering.

6. Above all take care, Thirdly, to vary your voice, according to the matter on which you speak. Nothing more grates the ear, than a voice still in the same key. And yet nothing is more common; although this monotony is not only unpleasant to the ear, but destroys the effect of what is spoken.

7. The best way to learn how to vary the voice, is, to observe common discourse. Take notice how you speak yourself in ordinary conversation, and how others speak on various occasions. After the very same manner you are to vary your voice in public, allowing for the largeness of the place, and the distance of the hearers.

SECTION II.

GENERAL RULES FOR THE VARIATION OF THE VOICE.

1. THE voice may be varied three ways: First, as to height or lowness; Secondly, as to vehemence or softness; Thirdly, as to swiftness or slowness.

And, (1.) As to height, a medium between the extremes is carefully to be observed. You must neither strain your voice, by raising it always to the highest note it can

reach; nor sink it always to the lowest note, which would be to murmur rather than to speak.

(2.) As to vehemence, have a care how you force your voice to the last extremity. You cannot hold this long, without danger of its cracking, and failing you on a sudden. Nor yet ought you to speak in too faint and remiss a manner, which destroys all the force and energy of what is spoken.

(3.) As to swiftness, you ought to moderate the voice so as to avoid all precipitation; otherwise you give the hearers no time to think, and so are not likely either to convince or to persuade them. Yet neither should you speak slower than men generally do in common conversation. It is a fault to draw out your words too slow, or to make needless breaks or pauses. Nay, to drawl is (of the two) worse than to hurry. The speech ought not to drop, but to flow along. But then it ought to flow like a gliding stream, not as a rapid torrent.

2. Yet let it be observed, that the medium I recommend does not consist in an indivisible point. It admits of a considerable latitude. As to the height or lowness of the voice, there are five or six notes whereby it may be varied, between the highest and the lowest; so here is abundant room for variation, without falling into either extreme. There is also sufficient room between the extremes of violence and of softness, to pronounce either more vehemently or more mildly, as different subjects may require. And as to swiftness or slowness, though you avoid both extremes, you may nevertheless speak faster or slower, and that in several degrees, as best answers the subject and passions of your discourse.

3. But it should likewise be observed, that the voice ought not to be varied too hastily in any of these respects; but the difference is to be made by degrees, and almost insensibly; too sudden a change being unnatural and affected, and consequently disagreeable to the hearers.

SECTION III.

PARTICULAR RULES FOR VARYING THE VOICE.

1. If you speak of natural things, merely to make the hearers understand them, there needs only a clear and distinct voice. But if you would display the wisdom and power of God therein, do it with a stronger and more solemn accent.

2. The good and honourable actions of men should be described with a full and lofty accent; wicked and infamous actions, with a strong and earnest voice, and such a tone as expresses horror and detestation.

3. In congratulating the happy events of life, we speak with a lively and cheerful accent; in relating misfortunes, (as in funeral orations,) with a slow and mournful one.

4. The voice should also be varied according to the greatness or importance of the subject; it being absurd either to speak in a lofty manner, where the subject is of little concern, or to speak of great and important affairs with a low, unconcerned, and familiar voice.

5. On all occasions let the thing you are to speak be deeply imprinted on your own heart; and when you are sensibly touched yourself, you will easily touch others, by adjusting your voice to every passion which you feel.

6. Love is shown by a soft, smooth, and melting voice; hate by a sharp and sullen one; joy by a full and flowing one; grief, by a dull, languishing tone, sometimes interrupted by a sigh or groan; fear is expressed by a trembling and hesitating voice; boldness, by speaking loud and strong; anger is shown by a sharp and impetuous tone, taking the breath often, and speaking short; compassion requires a soft and submissive voice.

7. After the expression of any violent passion, you should gradually lower your voice again. Readiness in

varying it on all kinds of subjects, as well as passions, is best acquired by frequently reading or repeating aloud either dialogues, select plays, or such discourses as come nearest to the dramatic style.

8. You should begin a discourse low, both as it expresses modesty, and as it is best for your voice and strength; and yet so as to be heard by all that are present. You may afterward rise as the matter shall require. The audience, likewise, being calm and unmoved at first, are best suited by a cool and dispassionate address.

9. Yet this rule admits of some exceptions; for on some extraordinary occasions you may begin a discourse abruptly and passionately, and consequently with a warm and passionate accent.

10. You may speak a little louder in laying down what you design to prove, and explaining it to your hearers. But you need not speak with any warmth or emotion yet; it is enough if you speak articulately and distinctly.

11. When you prove your point, and refute your adversary's objections, there is need of more earnestness and exertion of voice. And here chiefly it is that you are to vary your voice, according to the rules above recited.

12. A little pause may then precede the conclusion, in which you may gradually rise to the utmost strength of pronunciation; and finish all with a lively, cheerful voice, expressing joy and satisfaction.

13. An exclamation requires a loud and strong voice; and so does an oath or strong asseveration; as, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "I call God to record upon my soul."

14. In a prosopopœia, the voice should be varied according to the character of the persons introduced; in an apostrophe, according to the circumstances of the person or thing to which you address your speech; which, if directed either to God, or to inanimate things, ought to be louder than usual.

15. In reciting and answering objections, the voice should be varied as if two persons were speaking. And so in dialogues, or whenever several persons are introduced, as disputing or talking together.

16. In a climax, the voice must be gradually raised to answer every step of the figure. In an aposiopesis, the voice, which was raised to introduce it, must be lowered considerably. In an antithesis, the points are to be distinguished, and the former to be pronounced with a stronger tone than the latter; but in an anadiplosis the word repeated is pronounced the second time louder and stronger than the first.

17. Take care never to make a pause in the middle of a word or sentence; but only where there is such a pause in the sense as requires, or at least, allows of it. You may make a short pause after every period; and begin the next generally a little lower than you concluded the last; but on some occasions a little higher; which the nature of the subject will easily determine.

18. I would likewise advise every speaker to observe those who speak well, that he may not pronounce any word in an improper manner: and in case of doubt, let him not be ashamed to ask how such a word is to be pronounced; as neither to desire others that they would inform him whenever they hear him pronounce any word improperly.

19. Lastly. Take care not to sink your voice too much, at the conclusion of a period; but pronounce the very last words loud and distinct, especially if they have but a weak and dull sound of themselves.

SECTION IV.

OF GESTURE.

1. THAT this silent language of your face and hands may move the affections of those that see and hear you, it must be well adjusted to the subject, as well as to the passion which you desire either to express or excite. It must likewise be free from all affectation, and such as appears to be the mere, natural result, both of the things you speak, and of the affection that moves you to speak them. And the whole is so to be managed, that there may be nothing in all the dispositions and motions of your body to offend the eyes of the spectators.

2. But it is more difficult to find out the faults of your own gesture, than those of your pronunciation. For a man may hear his own voice, but he cannot see his own face; neither can he observe the several motions of his own body; at least, but imperfectly. To remedy this, you may use a large looking glass, as Demosthenes did, and thereby observe and learn to avoid every disagreeable or unhandsome gesture.

3. There is but one way better than this; which is, to have some excellent pattern as often as may be before your eyes; and to desire some skilful and faithful friend to observe all your motions, and inform you which are proper, and which are not.

4. As to the motion of the body, it ought not to change its place or posture every moment; neither, on the other hand, to stand like a stock, in one fixed and immovable posture; but to move in a natural and graceful manner, as various circumstances may require.

5. The head ought not to be held up too high, nor clownishly thrust forward; neither to be cast down, and hang, as it were, on the breast; nor to lean always on one or the other side; but to be kept modestly and decently

upright, in its natual state and position. Farther, it ought neither to be kept immovable, as a statue; nor to be continually moving and throwing itself about. To avoid both extremes, it should be turned gently, as occasion is, sometimes one way, sometimes the other; and at other times remain, looking straight forward, to the middle of the auditory. Add to this, that it ought always to be turned on the same side with the hands and body: only in refusing a thing; for this we do with the right hand, turning the head at the same time to the left.

6. But it is the face which gives the greatest life to action: of this, therefore, you must take the greatest care, that nothing may appear disagreeable in it; since it is continually in the view of all but yourself. And there is nothing can prevent this, but the looking glass, or a friend who will deal faithfully with you. You should adapt all its movements to the subject you treat of, the passions you would raise, and the persons to whom you speak. Let love or joy spread a cheerfulness over your face; hatred, sorrow, or fear, a gloominess. Look with gravity and authority on your inferiors; on your superiors, with boldness mixed with respect.

7. You should always be casting your eyes upon some or other of your auditors, and moving them from one side to the other, with an air of affection and regard; looking them decently in the face, one after another, as we do in familiar conversation. Your aspect should always be pleasant, and your looks direct, neither severe nor askew; unless you design to express contempt or scorn, which may require that particular aspect.

8. If you speak of heaven, or things above, lift up your eyes; if of things beneath, cast them down; and so if you speak of things of disgrace; but raise them in calling God to witness, or speaking of things wherein you glory.

9. The mouth must never be turned awry; neither must you bite or lick your lips, or shrug up your shoulders, or

lean upon your elbow; all which give just offence to the spectators.

10. We make use of the hand a thousand different ways; only very little at the beginning of a discourse. Concerning this, you may observe the rules following:—(1.) Never clap your hands nor thump the pulpit. (2.) Use the right hand most; and when you use the left, let it be only to accompany the other. (3.) The right hand may be gently applied to the breast, when you speak of your own faculties, heart, or conscience. (4.) You must begin your action with your speech, and end it when you make an end of speaking. (5.) The hands should seldom be lifted higher than the eyes, nor let down lower than the breast. (6.) Your eyes should always have your hands in view, so that they you speak to may see your eyes, your mouth, and your hands, all moving in concert with each other, and expressing the same thing. (7.) Seldom stretch out your arms side-ways, more than half a foot from the trunk of your body. (8.) Your hands are not to be in perpetual motion: this the ancients called the babbling of the hands.

11. There are many other things relating to action, as well as utterance, which cannot easily be expressed in writing. These you must learn by practice; by hearing a good speaker, and speaking often before him.

12. But remember while you are actually speaking, you must not be studying any other motions, but use those that naturally arise from the subject of your discourse, from the place where you speak, and the characters of the persons whom you address.

13. I would advise you, lastly, to observe these rules, as far as things permit, even in your common conversation, till you have got a perfect habit of observing them, so that they are, as it were, natural to you. And whenever you hear an eminent speaker, observe with the utmost attention what conformity there is between his action and

utterance, and these rules. You may afterward imitate him at home, till you have made his graces your own. And when once, by such assistances as these, you have acquired a good habit of speaking, you will no more need any tedious reflections upon this art, but will speak as easily as gracefully.

THE END.

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